

# THE FORTNIGHTLY

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## THE FIVE DAYS OF HOLLAND

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HOLLAND has a tale to tell. It is not a pretty tale. But it is high time it were told. So much has happened since the vast Juggernaut of German aggression first crushed Holland under its wheels that the tragedy of Holland, than which few more dramatic episodes have ever been enacted in history, already seems no more than a mere prelude to the far greater tragedy that has befallen the whole of Western civilization. Already the five days of Holland are lost among the overwhelming events of the bewildering weeks that were to follow. Holland, so it might be said, is old news, stale stuff, for Holland has been dead these many moons. Do not believe it for one instant. Holland may have lost its life but its spirit is as alive as it was during those endless years of war against the Spanish XVIth century tyrant. That spirit, bred of centuries of liberty and independence, can no more be squashed by the sudden violence of mechanized murder than by the slow torture of oppression. That spirit will live as long as Orange lives, as long as there are Dutchmen alive to fight for their country and Dynasty, as long as there is a voice left to tell the tale of Holland.

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Thursday, May 9 was a glorious day. A cloudless blue sky stood over the green fields and the busy cities of Holland. In the early morning hundreds of thousands of Dutch men and women had cycled through the clean, sunny streets on their way to their offices. Perhaps they had talked about the war a little. But not for long. It was not their war.

Quietly, happily the day passed, a day like any other except for the unusually warm and brilliant sunshine. In Rotterdam tugs scurried across the river, some because they had nothing else to do and yet were too full of life to lie still on this invigorating day, others to pick up one of the proud steamers

that still carried the Dutch flag across the seven oceans, regardless of risk and intent only on keeping up that peaceful trade without which small, densely populated Holland cannot live. In Amsterdam, brokers and commission agents crowded together in their usual meeting places to conduct their loud and gesticulating business as best they could under the severe difficulties of the time. From every wide open window on the canals and the narrow, crowded streets of Holland's cities came the merry sound of busy typewriters. A peaceful country was at work, butcherboys tearing around the streets on their bicycles, peasants slowly, ponderously milking their cows in the flat, green meadows, or sowing the seeds of crops to come in the freshly ploughed fields where the larks twittered high up in the blue sky, scholars bent over manuscripts in their quiet studies or speaking to their student audiences in the ancient halls of the universities. Only the Hague, with its large populace of retired, well to do people taking their morning coffee on the sunny café-terraces, had its usual and deceptive appearance of pleasant, dignified idleness.

Deceptive indeed. For behind the sunbaked facades of the government offices there was neither idleness nor pleasantries on this last day of peace but only a feverish activity and an ever deepening sense of gloom as the secret reports received from the intelligence service made it more and more evident that, with every passing hour, what had long been feared was to come true at last.

The evening came and the people of Holland, their day's work done, cycled back home again, perhaps even more confident about the future than they had been that morning, talking of the delicious mildness of the slowly falling night, which terrace to choose for a cup of coffee or a glass of beer after dinner, whether to enjoy the evening at home on the balcony or to go and sit out on the town square, listening to the ancient chimes of a provincial town hall or old church. Had not the evening papers been perfectly normal, empty of any alarming news? No reason, then, for worry or for fear. Holland, beloved Holland remained an island of peace. It could not happen. It could not really ever happen. It was inconceivable. That must have been one of the last thoughts of thousands of Dutchmen as they fell asleep in the starlit night of Thursday the 9th.

A few hours later it did happen. In the still of the night village after village, town after town was woken up by the



heavy throbbing drone of countless squadrons of aeroplanes passing overhead. What could it mean? Curtains were drawn aside, sleepy tousled heads peered out of windows. Perhaps a few jokes were exchanged between neighbours: whosoever they were, up there among the stars, they certainly were making a proper hash of Dutch neutrality. For this time it was not the one or two planes that on several previous occasions had been violating Dutch neutrality, but a whole Armada. And yet to many wondering heads the thought did not occur that this heavy drone that filled the sky could portend anything more than another and especially massive violation of neutrality such as had already taken place often before on a smaller scale. The illusion was not to last long. Within a few minutes after the Germans had begun to shoot and blast their way into the country with which only yesterday they pretended to live in peace, lacking a single grievance, the alarm was sounded all over the sleeping land. Despatch riders roared out into the night, telephone bells started ringing madly in a thousand defence posts and in a hundred thousand private homes and long before another glorious day had dawned, every village and town knew that the inconceivable had happened, that after more than a century of peace Holland was at war. Holland's hour that was to last five days had come.

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When shortly after 3 a.m. on that Friday morning the roar of the German air armada began to fill the sky, there was a small group of men in the Hague to whom the threatening drone came not as a shock of horrorstruck surprise but perhaps even as a sort of relief. At last their long vigil was over. No more waiting for the minutes to tick away, no more struggling against a last desperate hope which they knew to be unfounded and which yet would not let itself be subdued. As long ago as Monday of the same week they had already received information suggesting that the German machine of aggression had been set into motion, this time irrevocably. In all silence they had taken their final measures to put the country in a state of full preparedness. As far as possible the public was kept in ignorance of these preparations and the disquieting information which had given rise to them. What was the use of creating a general state of alarm? The German newspapers would only seize on reports of Dutch preparations as a sign

of a "provocative attitude". Silent preparedness was the only possible course to take. Then, about 9 o'clock on that Thursday evening when everything had been prepared to the last detail to meet the threatening attack, there came another telephone call from Berlin: be ready, the attack is timed for early next morning. For a moment the tension of waiting was relieved by the necessity of action. Telephone, give the order to blow up strategic bridges and frontier roads, complete the final preparations. Then resume your waiting, waiting, waiting . . . .

But these few men, ministers and generals sitting together in a quiet room, waiting, talking and conferring while all around them the Hague slept its peaceful sleep, were not the only ones to keep vigil through this endless Thursday night. All over Holland there were shadowy figures in green uniforms standing guard on the dykes, sitting in small pill-boxes behind the rivers, lying behind earth work fortifications near the frontier, all intently peering into the darkness of the East.

A little later, about midnight, the silence of these waiting thousands was broken by a series of sharp explosions at a number of important bridges. In the space of a few minutes, one after another, the great iron structures, most of them rebuilt along the most modern lines within the last ten years, cracked in the middle with a shattering roar and plunged into the dark, swiftly flowing water underneath. Voices called to one another through the darkness as the demolition parties finished their sad work till once again tense silence fell over the sleeping land.

Where did the first shot fall that shattered this silent night and ushered in the five days of roaring violence that were to end only in the re-establishment of another and ten times more fearful silence? Impossible to say. Once begun, the pace of the battle was too fast and furious, the fog of war too thick to allow more than the general outline to become visible. The first news which the small group of men sitting in the foreign minister's study received, was that bombs had begun to fall on the aerodrome of Rotterdam shortly after 3 a.m. After that reports began to come in from all parts of the country in an ever growing stream. And always they told the same story: German aeroplanes were signalled over all the important aerodromes. Almost simultaneously the news was received that advance elements of the German army had begun to cross the frontier from its Northernmost tip on the North sea to the



Southernmost point near Maastricht where it joins the Belgian frontier.

So far so good. A simultaneous air and land attack of this kind had long been prepared for. For Holland's neutrality was an armed neutrality. Holland was ready and determined to defend itself not only in the East but, if need be, in the West as well. The Dutch army was at its post, firmly entrenched behind the successive water defences. The coastal defence posts in the West and the North were fully manned. Navy and airforce had stood by for several days, ready to go into action at a moment's notice. On all but those aerodromes which had to serve the Dutch fighter squadrons, drainage pipes, old automobiles and obstacles of all kinds had been placed so as to render them useless as landing grounds for enemy planes. Even the wide autostradas which had been built right across the country in the last few years and which had given Holland one of the best and most modern networks of roads in the world had been blocked against enemy landings in this way. Tanktraps were in position at all important points and at this very hour of 3 a.m., when the tramp of marching troops, the drone of the aeroplanes high up in the dark sky, and the dull bangs of bombs exploding around the aerodromes woke all Holland to the still incredulous realization that it was war at last, hundreds of bridges were already going up in the air completing the demolition begun some hours earlier and hundreds of sluices let in the old enemy, now in this hour of trial become Holland's most reliable ally: the black gurgling water silently rising in the chain of empty fields of the carefully planned inundation zones.

Sadly, but not without confidence, therefore, the ministers at about half past four on Friday morning assembled in the house of their leader. The terrifying darkness, out of which that first unseen roar of the German squadrons had come, had given way to a fresh and radiant dawn. Never did the spacious, pleasant dignity of the Hague's clean streets and still almost deserted squares seem more solidly permanent and peaceful than on this cool and brilliant morning, so full of the promise of the summer warmth to come. So incongruous was the thought of war even at this moment that the sharp bursts of anti-aircraft fire and the threatening drone of the German bombers circling in the blue sky overhead, sometimes roaring down in steep earshattering dives, occasionally as if by accident dropping a few bombs on the inoffensive town,

seemed almost in the nature of a bad and morbid jest. But the men who had come together in the Prime Minister's house had no time to wonder at this gruesome incongruity. They had work to do; a royal proclamation to draft, a thousand decisions to take, bombs or no bombs. Thus, they sat and worked while in one city after another the waiting sirens rent the cool morning air, while less than 20 miles away a rain of bombs and fire was thundering down on the buildings and hangars of Rotterdam aerodrome, while on one of the busiest squares of Amsterdam just outside the station a flaming enemy plane crashed among a crowd of gaping spectators, while in the dewy meadows along the Eastern rivers the machine guns manned by the desperate men in green were pouring out their stuttering fire at the invading tanks, while one of the attacker's armoured trains was being blown sky high together with the bridge which it was trying to cross, while in a hundred thousand homes and in a hundred thousand cellars families only just roused from peaceful sleep, sat miserably huddled together in blankeyed astonishment that all these incredible terrifying things could really be happening, in their yesterday still so happy land.

It was about six o'clock when at last the long-expected telephone message came that the German Ambassador requested an audience with the Foreign Minister. Shortly afterwards, in the Minister's room in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the two men met. Over what passed at this short and tragic meeting I prefer to draw the veil of silence. There is to me no joy nor pride in the humiliation of a man who is forced to act against his conscience, even when that man is an enemy. Let us leave it to the bearers of the "new culture", the apostles of the "new heroic morality" to gloat over the discomfiture of their adversaries. Rather I would now tell of what had been happening a little earlier in Berlin. For that indeed is a pretty tale.

At 3.50 Dutch time, that is to say, almost an hour after the German troops and aeroplanes had launched their wanton assault, the Dutch Minister in Berlin was visited by a German official who requested him immediately to go and see Herr von Ribbentrop at the German Foreign Office.

As soon as the Dutch Minister was received by Herr von Ribbentrop, about 40 minutes later, he was given what must be considered one of the most extraordinary documents that has ever come out of a Foreign Office. It consisted of a



memorandum from the German Government accompanied by two "communications" (Berichte), one signed by the German High Command, one by Ministers Himmler and Frick. Each of the three documents, which together total no less than 58 pages would be worth a separate article, for they afford an example, not only of brazen mendacity and incredible hypocrisy, but also of the German technique of lying and the German ideas of evidence which would make a fascinating and highly profitable study for the student of Nazi methods. But this digression, interesting as it is, must be kept within limits, so only a few of the highlights of the episode will be indicated here.

What did these 58 pages of typescript try to prove? That Germany had the right "to secure Holland's neutrality by all means" because Holland "had entirely and onesidedly favoured Germany's opponents and assisted them in their plans", because "it is perfectly clear from the irrefutable facts that Holland had from the outbreak of war secretly and notwithstanding official declarations to the contrary ranged itself on the side of the Allies", because "in the light of the established facts Holland's apparent and officially declared policy of neutrality can only be considered as an attempt to conceal and disguise the real purpose of Dutch policy", (all this, incidentally, goes for Belgium too; throughout large parts of the memorandum the two guilty nations are mentioned in one breath; why bother to waste paper, and ingenuity in drawing up two separate trumped-up charge sheets?) because "there is irrefutable proof that the Anglo-French attack on Germany through Holland and Belgium is imminent and because the Reich Government can no longer doubt that Holland and Belgium are determined not only to tolerate the imminent Anglo-French attack, but even to assist it in every way", because "in this war forced upon the German people by England and France the Reich Government refuses to wait passively for the attack of England and France and allow them to carry the war via Dutch and Belgium territory into German soil".

In this collection of quotations you have a perfect example of the applied technique of propagating untruths so eloquently expounded in *Mein Kampf*: repeat a lie often enough, make sure it is a big lie, and in the end you will get people to believe it. It is interesting also to note that the framers of the document feel the need to stress again and again the

"irrefutable" character of their evidence, facts and proofs. The memorandum uses the words prove and proof 6 times, and not once without adding the word "strong" or "irrefutable" or "documentary".

Now consider the "evidence" on which all these charges are based. It is impossible to mention more than a small fraction of it, for its framers have ranged wide and far in their search for arguments and have characteristically included in their indictment the smallest trifles (such as the alleged refusal of some Dutch pilots to pilot German ships "presumably ordered to do so by their Government") as well as the most sweeping and baseless accusations ("under the pressure of England, Holland has adopted an economic policy which is entirely hostile to Germany"; "The measures of the Dutch High Command have been taken in the closest agreement and after previous understanding with the Anglo-French General Staff.") Some idea of the value of this German evidence may be obtained from the following example:

A still stronger proof of the true attitude of the Dutch (so the document runs) is that their mobilized troops were directed entirely and exclusively towards Germany. This redistribution of the Dutch troops with front against Germany was undertaken at a time when their neutrality seemed ever more threatened by the massing of aggressive Anglo-French troops on the Franco-Belgian frontier and when Germany had not concentrated any troops on the Dutch and Belgian frontiers. Through these sudden measures, violating every military principle, the Dutch and Belgian High Command have revealed their true attitude. Their action becomes comprehensible, however, when one knows that these measures were taken in the closest consultation with the Anglo-French High Command.

So now one knows. Because the Dutch authorities took reasonable precautions to protect their neutrality against the danger of an attack from the East by the power which on November 11, 1939, had only called off the attack at the very last minute, which ever since had maintained large troop concentrations on Holland's frontier and which had already attacked Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark and Norway, it follows that they were conspiring with England and France for an attack on innocent peaceful Germany.

There is much more of the like in this incredible document. But enough has already been said to show up its farcical character. Farcical is indeed the only word for it. For it is utterly impossible to wax indignant about the accusations of unneutrality directed against a country which at the cost of its natural preferences as a civilized democratic nation has



made every sacrifice to maintain a strict impartiality in word and action; which had put severe penalties on newspaper comment hostile to either one of the belligerents; which had so long and so firmly refused any idea of military understandings or staff talks that the Allies never even took the trouble to ask for such talks; which protested against every violation of its neutral rights so consistently and forcefully that the Allies, far from regarding Holland as one of their "advance posts" often complained bitterly of what they considered Holland's excessively legalistic conception of its rights and duties as a neutral; which, finally, is so situated between its two warring neighbours that it could not for one moment even dream of being anything but strictly neutral without volunteering to become the battlefield of Europe.—Holland not sufficiently neutral, Holland guilty of siding and conspiring with the Allies? Never was there a feebler, drearier jest.

But there is worse to come, worse even than the tedious transparent lies, the heavy ponderous hypocrisy of the document. At the end of the memorandum, after 10 pages of indignant accusations based on irrefutable proofs, the courage of this inventive mendacity suddenly deserts the author. And instead there comes that weak, shrinking refusal of responsibility, that pitiful whine that we have heard so often from Berlin: We did not want this—*Wir haben dies nicht gewollt*.

The German troops do not come as enemies of the Dutch people, for the German government has not wanted this development nor been the cause of it. The responsibility falls on England and France, who have prepared the attack against Germany on Dutch and Belgian soil to the last detail, and on the Dutch and Belgian governments who have tolerated and favoured this attack.

But why, then, if all these charges of conspiring with the Allies for Germany's downfall are really based on irrefutable proof, if Holland has really been guilty of hostile intent and behaviour towards Germany, why then this sudden and surprising assurance that the German troops do not come as the enemies which they would have every reason to be, were the charges levelled against Holland really true?

"We do not come as enemies", they said. But that, at least, was not for them to decide. That was for the Dutch to decide and decide they did, without one moment's hesitation or flinching, with one sudden outburst of just and furious rage.

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Meanwhile back in Holland the war which the German Government had not wanted, had developed with lightning

speed. For this was indeed a lightning war if ever there was one. By the time the thrifty and industrious people of Holland would normally have been at work, less than 6 hours after the first explosions of the German bombs shattered the peace that had endured for more than a century, it had already become clear to the High Command and to the group of Ministers sitting at the Hague that their calculations were being upset by an entirely new factor and the employment of entirely new methods which they had not seriously reckoned with: invasion through the air. At the time it was not yet possible to see exactly what was happening and what it was leading to. All that could be gathered from the steady stream of reports coming in from all over the country, was that parachutists in their hundreds were being dropped in a great many places far behind the Dutch lines, while at the same time German transport planes were landing fully equipped troops, not by the hundred but by the thousand. The carefully planned scheme and the grave threat of this invasion from the air became clear only at a later stage. On that hectic Friday morning it could still seem as if the only object of these men falling from the skies was to create confusion behind the lines and no more than that. Confusion they certainly did create. Almost immediately after the stunned population of Western Holland had learned that German troops had crossed the frontier 200 miles away to the East, the enemy was among them. Peasants working in the tulip fields just behind the dunes along the West coast, thinking the war still distant, suddenly found themselves surrounded by small groups of desperate, heavily armed men. Dropping down in carefully selected meadows where at this early hour only a few lazy cows stood peacefully grazing, they immediately assembled in small formations, made contact with other groups through prearranged birdcalls and set out to occupy strategic points in the neighbourhood, commandeering cars at pistol point, shooting wildly in all directions whenever they met with resistance, causing bewilderment, terror and confusion wherever they appeared. And always more would come floating down out of the blue sky, always others who had come down unseen would surge up in the most unexpected places. Thus within a few hours the core of the country, enclosed by the ring of water which until yesterday had been thought a guarantee against invasion, was riddled with small enemy detachments, bands of ruthless armed men popping up from nowhere, roving across the fields and along the country



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roads, entrenching themselves in houses and behind natural obstacles and filling the air with their rifle shots and the sharp bursts of fire from their sawn-off shotguns.

Meanwhile the true purpose of the first parachutist invasion had become apparent. Apart from trying to sow confusion and terror among the civilian population behind the lines, the first object was obviously to close in on the Hague, the centre of the Royal, civil and military authority. So much was clear from the semi-circle of positions which they had established around the Hague immediately after landing. The conclusion was later confirmed by plans and instructions found on a captured German officer, from which it appeared that the parachutists had orders to take the Hague and capture the Royal Family and the Government within 24 hours, that is, before 3 p.m. on the Friday afternoon. So confident were the Germans of being able to carry out these instructions that they had even brought the horse along on which the General in command of the airborne troops, General von Sponeck, was to parade through the Hague that very night. Truly, the German military mind forgets nothing except perhaps the valour of his enemy. For that night General Von Sponeck lay dead like hundreds of his men and the capital which was to be his by 3 p.m. remained in the hands of the Dutch till the day that fighting had to cease.

That this German scheme was frustrated was due to the decision to throw the whole of the army corps, which was meant as a reserve for the main body of the army in the East, into the task of cleaning up the airborne troops that had come down in the West. Thus the guerilla war started, that was to continue day and night in a hundred places, suddenly flaming up now here, now there, in the dunes, in sleepy villages, between the startled cows in the meadows, on bridges, in the garden suburbs around the Hague, even in the very centre of the great towns. Everywhere during these hectic days volleys of rifle and machine gun fire were ringing out as the weary Dutch detachments, ceaselessly hunting their quarry, again and again trapped the roving bands till at last the commander in charge of these tireless hunters could report that the situation around the Hague was being mastered.

But that was not to be until much later, perhaps Saturday night or Sunday morning, and meanwhile perturbing news had come from the South East. Isolated detachments of German parachutists and German infantry landed by transport

planes had straddled the three rivers that completed the ring of water in the South. Who of us then realized the full gravity of the news, who of us grasped that already on this Friday morning the tragedy was moving towards its inevitable end? And yet now, looking back and seeing the German plan of invasion from the air in its entirety it seems so clear that even then Holland's doom was being sealed.

To explain how it all came about let us go back again to that dark hour on Friday morning when at 3 a.m. the sudden heavy bombardment of Rotterdam aerodrome set the night sky ablaze with roaring flame. The bombs began to fall, not, as it quickly turned out, directly on the aerodrome itself, but on the hangars and on the barracks around the aerodrome where the military guards were stationed. The reason for this selection of objectives was obvious enough. The invaders wished to destroy the ground defences while leaving the flying field itself intact so as to be able to land their troops on it. Thanks to the overwhelming superiority of numbers and the initial advantage always possessed by the attacker they succeeded in both objects. Before the sun had risen most of the Dutch ground defences were a heap of smoking ruins and wave after wave of German transport planes began to land their troops on the aerodrome. Well over 10,000 men, a whole division complete with equipment which even included light artillery, were landed in this way, only a mile away from the vitally important bridges across the Southern and Northern arms of the river Meuse.

Naturally, the enemy had not been able to achieve this surprise without suffering heavy losses. Again and again Dutch fighter squadrons took off to throw themselves at the clouds of German transport planes with a reckless daring proved by the fact that in a short time over 150 German planes had been destroyed and close on 90% of the Dutch air force had been used up in the process. But always with an almost inhuman passivity new swarms of German planes would come out of the East till no Dutch fighters were left to attack them and the Germans had a free hand to start a regular shuttle service to and fro between Rotterdam aerodrome and their own aerodromes only a short distance away across the German frontier. Thus, already in the course of Friday the German troops were able to advance the short distance from the aerodrome to the lower arm of the river, to seize the bridge across it, and to establish themselves on the bridge across the Northern arm of



the river as well. And there they remained, holding the two bridges against all attacks so as to keep open the passage for the armoured division which was to appear three days later and whose thrust across the southern rampart of the Dutch water defences right into the heart of the country finally made further resistance impossible.

Still, even the loss of these two bridges through the surprise attack of airborne troops in great numbers, need not have been fatal to the Dutch scheme of defence, had it not been for something else which was happening at the same time at two other points further South. The main ring of water, so it seemed, had not yet been pierced. Descending from the air a large but isolated enemy detachment had merely succeeded in straddling one of the inner rings. The masses of the enemy army were still outside and would yet have to break through the outer ring further South before they would be able to pour through the passage which the airborne troops had prepared for him in the inner ring. Provided the outer line of water further towards the South could be held, the isolated enemy elements within the ring could probably be dealt with. All was not lost yet.

Alas, almost simultaneously with the report that the enemy had secured the bridges in Rotterdam, information was received that by some incredible mischance the bridge across the outer ring of water in the South had also fallen into his hands. This indeed was serious. What exactly happened will perhaps never be explained. Dead men tell no tales. But the broad outlines of this tragic episode which has proved to be the beginning of the end, are clear enough.

It was between three and four in the morning. From the East the first glimmer of light was creeping up into the starlit sky. In the semi-darkness the graceful outlines of the two bridges that span the broad stream with more than ten curving arches were dimly visible. One was a railway bridge and the other, perhaps half a mile up the river had been built only a few years ago to serve the motor traffic between the Northern and Southern parts of the country. At the Southern bridge-heads two companies of soldiers kept watch in the pillboxes built on either side. Within reach of their hand was the button to send the work of Holland's best engineers plunging to destruction at a moment's notice. But that moment had not yet arrived. The only link between the fortress of Holland and the South, whence alone French help could come in time

of need, might not be destroyed except as a last resort. For the time being, therefore, there was nothing to do but wait and watch.

The scene that followed can only be partially reconstructed from the known facts. Out of the darkness a few figures came quietly walking along the road, advancing towards the bridge-head. Perhaps the sentry on guard challenged them, perhaps he had already recognized them from their distinctive Dutch uniform as state troopers before they came within hailing distance. At any rate, he allowed them to advance. The next moment all was uproar. At close range the Germans disguised in Dutch uniforms hurled dozens of hand grenades at the sentries and their comrades. Caught off their guard the party of Dutch soldiers controlling the most crucially important bridge of all Holland was wiped out and before the news had reached the nearest defence post from which reinforcements could come, the German attackers supported by hundreds of parachutists that were now coming down on all sides, cut the cables to the dynamite charges and entrenched themselves at both ends of the bridge.

At about the same time something similar had happened 10 miles further north where the road leading from the South into the fortress of Holland again crosses a river. There, too, hundreds of parachutists came down out of the sky and overpowered the Dutch detachment standing guard over the bridge. There, too, they were quickly reinforced, this time not only by further landings of parachutists but also by regiments of the regular infantry and light artillery, which during all this time were landing in the Rotterdam aerodrome and which immediately marched off to the South to make contact with the parachutists entrenched on the Dordrecht and Moerdyk bridges. Thus, with these unprecedented methods, violating every idea of military honour and every law of war, the overwhelmingly powerful Third Reich waged war on its small neighbour. Thus it succeeded in what no military expert could have foreseen: the capture of the four bridges across the successive lines of water in the South, the opening of a passage right into the heart of the fortress of Holland.

It was with the depressing knowledge that this extremely dangerous hole had been pierced through Holland's ring of water that the Cabinet late that evening surveyed the events of the day and the prospects for the morrow in the cellar of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. As the days went on and



one air raid alarm followed another, this cellar was to become their permanent council chamber. There, deep down under the ground, a number of them was always present to deal with the stream of incoming reports, there occasionally they would snatch a few hours' sleep or eat a hurried meal. For while the battle had raged all day in the East, while airborne troops and parachutists in disguise had established themselves at strategic points within the ring of water, nightfall had brought yet another danger which now made even the streets of the Hague itself unsafe to venture in. The fifth column was at work. How much exactly it has contributed to Holland's downfall may never be known. For fifth column and parachutists were inextricably intermingled. When suddenly a burst of rifle fire would come from a window or when bullets whistled down from an innocent looking housetop, it was impossible to say whether the hand that fired the gun was that of a German parachutist who at pistol point had forced entry into the house against the will of its owner or that of a Dutch Nazi or German resident. All one can say with certainty is that many parachutists, on several of whom addresses were found of German residents or Dutch Nazis, managed to entrench themselves in private houses, some no doubt with the complicity of the Dutch or German house-owner. So it was that already on this first night of war the empty streets of the Hague and many other cities equally far from the real frontline, resounded with intermittent rifle and machine gun fire. Danger lurked everywhere, bullets whizzed through the darkened streets and across the deserted squares where only 24 hours ago the quiet orderly populace had been taking the mild evening air in a blaze of peaceful lights.

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Saturday came with another glorious blue sky and blazing sun. Much that only yesterday seemed so incredible and strange had now already become ordinary and lost much of its terrifying, bewildering newness. The shooting in the streets, the flaming aeroplanes hurtling through the sky, the constant wailing of the sirens, the ballooning parachutes floating down from the blue heavens, the hunt of the roving enemy bands, all that which the day before had still been a nightmare had now become part of daily life. Meanwhile, beyond the ring of water the battle was raging in all its fury. Everywhere the men in green were putting up a desperate resistance against the overwhelmingly powerful enemy. Nor were their heavy

sacrifices in vain. For their task was not to hold the enemy in the indefensible provinces of the East but to retard his advance while they themselves fell back behind the concentric rings of water in the Centre and the West. This they did, suffering heavy losses but inflicting as many if not more on the enemy. In short, except for disappointments at two points, operations proceeded according to plan. But the two points were dangerous: the German troops which had quickly marched through the indefensible provinces of the North East had smashed their way through the fortified bridgehead at the Eastern end of the dam which leads across the one time Zuyderzee to the Province of North Holland and thus on to the heart of the country; at the same time in the South a German armoured division of the type which a few weeks later was to smash its way through the French Army, having profited by the gap between the Southern end of the Dutch defence lines and the Northern tip of the Belgian line, was proceeding towards the Southern side of the ring of water and thus on to the four fateful bridges. The fortress of Holland within the ring of water was threatened from two sides.

Already, on Saturday, therefore, the situation showed signs of becoming desperate. Steadily with tumultuous clanking of steel and iron, the enemy column of some five hundred armoured vehicles, tanks, heavy cars, motorized units of all kinds, rattled along towards the Moerdijk bridge, where ever since the dawn of Friday a German parachutist detachment had held open the passage to the interior. At the same time another column was advancing along the Zuyderzee dam. Halfway along the dam in the North the enemy column met the desperate resistance of the fort of Kornweerderzand. The great locks in the dyke had already been blown up. But technical difficulties did not stop the invader whose engineers had planned the aggression in such minute detail that they even carry whole bridges along with them, every part made to measure, ready to be fitted into place the moment the retreating troops have done their work of demolition. Only fire could stop this attack, and fire was met at the fortress of Kornweerderzand. There under the vast sky of a Dutch seascape, on the green dam which stretches across more than 20 miles of blue water, with the swerving gulls above crying their raucous exultation, the enemy was held.

But while the thrust through the North is held, elsewhere the danger is increasing hourly. Still the heavy column



rattled on towards the Moerdyk bridge. Once having smashed through the defences in the East there was little to stem its progress along the flat, straight roads of this practically indefensible part of the country. Even the French troops that have rushed up through Belgium were not powerful or numerous enough to stop the onslaught of the rolling fortresses.

Could the German detachments be dislodged from the bridges further North in Dordrecht and in Rotterdam? Desperate efforts were made. Dordrecht was stormed by Dutch troops and retaken at the cost of thousands of lives, only to be lost again. Artillery was brought up right into the centre of Rotterdam to blast the enemy out of his position on the other side of the river. A destroyer steamed up the narrow winding river and went into action in the middle of the city shelling the Southern river bank at point blank range until after thirty-one attacks the German dive bombers, roaring down on the stationary ship, at last sent it to the bottom of the stream. At night Royal Air Force bombers came over from England to drop their loads on the Rotterdam aerodrome where German reinforcements are still being landed in wave after wave of transport planes. Everything was tried. Sometimes the defending forces scored successes. The men in the cellar twenty miles away received the report that the aerodrome had been retaken. Then, almost the next minute, it seemed to be lost again. The reports of the wild fighting in and around Rotterdam become ever more confused and bewildering. But when at last, late that Saturday night, the fog of war lifted a little, it became clear that in spite of all the sacrifices and all the desperate fighting the four bridges were still open to the faraway rattling column which now with every minute came nearer and nearer to the fateful gap.

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Was it on Sunday or Monday that the men in the Hague after a long conference with the Commander-in-Chief finally had to recognize that the situation was rapidly becoming hopeless? Looking back it seems almost impossible to say. In those few wild and desperate days Holland lived a century and all sense of time was lost. One day was like another and merged imperceptibly into the next. Always the same brilliant sun and glorious blue sky. Always the same stunning impact of stupendous happenings and the same wild alternation

of hope and despair. Events moved too fast, time was left behind. Only the ever deepening sense of doom marked the passage of the hours.

Sunday or Monday? No matter. Perhaps some of us felt the doom settling on our country earlier than others. But when Monday morning dawned, again with that brilliant sunshine that seemed so mockingly gay, so cruelly indifferent to the agony of our unhappy people, there was not one among the ministers who did not realize that the end was near. For a moment there could still be a new flicker of hope. The heroic men of Kornweerderzand had checked the enemy advance along the Zuyderzee dyke. At the same time thousands of young Dutchmen had that night given their lives in a successful counter-attack on the Eastern side of the fortress of Holland. The breach which the enemy had made there in the course of Sunday had been closed. The Grebbe line still held. But soon reports began to come in that the enemy with his inexhaustible resources in man power and material had resumed the attack, this time with low flying aeroplanes and tanks, against which the Dutch troops, now that the whole of the air force had gone down fighting, could no longer hold out. In the East only the last rampart of water remained.

And yet even then, the position need not have been hopeless. The retreating forces had fallen back behind the last rampart in good order. By far the largest part of the country might be in the hands of the enemy but the fortress of Holland, the region including all the big cities, the nerve centre of the Dutch empire, was still enclosed by a wide stretch of flooded land in the East and a number of wide rivers in the South. Within this region most of the trouble making parachutists and fifth columnists were rapidly being mopped up. The situation was serious but by no means unforeseen. On the contrary, the Dutch strategists had always reckoned with the probability that the country outside of the fortress of Holland would have to be written off and that only the region within the ring of water could be held. The end might still have been far off, therefore, had it not been for those four bridges down in the South East, had it not been for the clanking rumble of that armoured column.



## THE COMING ECONOMIC CRISIS:

### PLAN OR CHAOS

BY HUGH QUIGLEY

THE position of this country after the first twelve months of war requires some reassessment, particularly in economic matters. It was confidently assumed at the outbreak of war that sufficient time would be granted to this country to mobilize its economic and military resources and present a solid defensive front to Germany; the theory of the overwhelming strength of the defence was so firmly ingrained in our strategists that it was believed that all we had to do was to consolidate our position, sort out the sections of the national activity which should be devoted exclusively to war, without any special concentration of effort and leave the remainder to the prosecution of normal peacetime activity. The strength of the blockade was calculated to deprive Germany of so many essential economic resources, while our own were intact, that the process of attrition would bring the war to a conclusion without heavy casualties. We would strengthen our competitive position, particularly in exports, and eliminate Germany from overseas markets.

The adoption of this policy, if it had been successful in practice, would have permitted a fair degree of inefficiency and waste without any serious consequences for the military effort of Great Britain and for the strain which the conclusion of peace and the necessity for economic reconstruction would have imposed on our organizing capacity as a nation. The problems were difficult, but they were not impossible of solution because we had, on the whole, a sufficient margin in actual resources to make good the majority of the blunders of our administrators. We could neglect the scientific planning of our industrial effort and still maintain a fairly large proportion of individual enterprise without being in any serious danger of collapse. The war was not seen as a mobilization of all effort, irrespective of what it was, in order to ensure the preservation of the State at war. Now that Hitler's victories

have shown the necessity for such a mobilization, there is a real danger that the State at peace may be sacrificed to the demands of the State at war and future recovery seriously compromised.

Instead of Germany being blockaded and deprived of resources necessary for the successful prosecution of the war as one expected, it is Great Britain which is threatened with blockade, and the paucity of resources directly and easily available is becoming more and more apparent. Our administrators were, and are still not alive to the real implications of the combined strategy of Mussolini and Hitler. The obvious policy for Hitler was to consolidate his position in Europe, partly by conquest, partly by intrigue and partly by political arrangement with Russia. With Europe under his control and a friendly Russia, his supplies of munitions necessary for war, with the possible exception of oil, were definitely ensured, and to that extent the British blockade had become useless. The British blockade now only operates to prevent German shipments overseas, but it is not necessary for the Nazi régime to develop any export trade at all, provided it has control over raw materials and food necessary for the maintenance of its population and its army in the field. That Hitler secured by the conquest of Europe.

The second phase in the blockade of Great Britain, which is only now beginning, is the neutralization or destruction of resources available to this country. In other words, the invasion and conquest of Africa. The obstacles confronting an easy conquest of our African colonies and dominions are less, comparatively, than Hitler found even in Europe. The surrender of British Somaliland, the inexplicable tenderness to Italy in Africa and Italy, the inability to organize active rebellion in Abyssinia, the obvious refusal to secure control in Syria and Tunis are all indications that the economic consequences of political incapacity are not even partially understood. The second phase in the Germano-Italian programme of destruction of our resources, owing to our failure, is already far advanced.

The third phase, namely the economic disintegration of Great Britain itself by direct action of the enemy is now being undertaken on the large scale. The air attacks on Great Britain have been designed hitherto, not to paralyse our centres of industrial production, but to immobilize within the island so great an army that no striking force in any number will be released for the defence and reconquest of Africa.



I am not concerned at the moment with the second phase of the campaign, namely the occupation of Africa, which can be neutralized almost immediately by appropriate action on the part of the Government, or with the enemy attack on production in Great Britain. The greatest danger of all comes from the action or inaction of the British Government itself.

The economic policy pursued by the Government, as far as it is possible to decipher anything at all from published speeches and statements, is devoted to one thing only, to secure as large a production of munitions of war, including aircraft and ships, as possible. No other matter is even being superficially considered. The assumption is still made that the worst effects of the blockade, as carried out by Germany and Italy, are now over, and that we shall be able to live comfortably on our own resources, supplemented by imports from the United States.

It is as well to be clear about a few things right at the beginning. The French example has shown that the volume of war effort is of no importance beside its direction and its control. There is no point in manufacturing an immense quantity of munitions of war that cannot conceivably be used under modern conditions, and war production in this country may be directed not to products of most immediate and direct use but to products which may appeal to the reactionary military mind as essential, but can only be regarded as museum pieces by the tactician who is entirely aware of the implications of modern warfare.

Again, the defence of this country does not require the immobilization of over three million men to the neglect of outlying and vital sections of the British Empire. This island requires only a fraction of that number for its effective defence, but if British military policy, either spontaneously evolved or forced on it by Hitler or Mussolini, is to conduct important battles in Africa or elsewhere and transport large expeditionary forces with all their equipment, then a different range and volume of equipment are required in order to make such campaigns successful. Few mistakes can be made in increasing production of aircraft, aircraft carriers or merchant shipping, but terrible mistakes can be incurred in the provision of military equipment. The Dunkirk incident showed this quite clearly. While, therefore, the Government may simplify the issue by concentrating the entire national effort on war production, it may at the same time be concentrating on the

wrong kind of production. There is certainly no indication of a central planning organization which is aware of this danger and is directing our resources to that end. There is no intelligent higher control over the diversified efforts of the Ministries of Supply, Labour and Aircraft Production and the Navy. All four are engaged in fighting for priorities and appealing to the public to support their particular phase of the war effort, irrespective of any other phase, and it appears to be no man's business to remove duplication, to avoid unnecessary effort and waste of economic, financial and human resources. The Ministry of Labour may be training hundreds of thousands of skilled men to produce munitions, it may be attracting from civilian employment a large army of skilled workers, but by doing so it may, in effect, be weakening the total war effort of the country. The single policy of concentrating on war production, without reference to civilian needs or economic requirements, both in peace and war, is precisely the policy which may lead to the defeat of this country.

What are the weaknesses in the present situation for which no policy of co-ordination or control exists? Despite the soothing affirmations of the Government, the general economic position of this country after a year of war has not improved: it has quite definitely become weaker, and the tragic thing is that a considerable part, if not all, of this deterioration could have been avoided by intelligent planning and appropriate national action. The effective realization and application of such national resources as we possess, financial, human and material, has not been carried out.

The position in the only two important natural resources, namely coal and the products of the soil, is chaotic in the extreme. The confusion and waste in the production and marketing of coal is barely exceeded by the grotesque inefficiency and chaos in the disposal of our agricultural produce. In this year of intense blockade, the country has had the great advantage of really large crops of market garden produce, fruit, potatoes and cereals, but the Government frankly does not know what to do with those crops. It has, through the Ministry of Food, made an incredible series of blunders. From the provision of extra sugar weeks too late to be used for the plum crop to the ineffable advice given by Mr. Robert Boothby to cut down consumption of fresh fruit, the display of incapacity becomes ever more impressive. The Ministry of Agriculture tries to equate overproduction in the world's



cereals to the necessities of a beleaguered population, shuffles agricultural prices to such a degree that the farmers have been effectively discouraged and agricultural output must decline. At the same time, large sections of the population and the army are deprived of those very agricultural products which cannot be distributed and sold by the farming community.

Again, the same form of restriction has put our building trades out of commission, and the Government has even abandoned the notion of housing the army in cantonments in favour of billeting on the civilian population. In the three industries using their natural resources, namely mining, agriculture and building, the position, despite theoretical Government control and assistance, has deteriorated considerably since September, 1939.

If we examine now the state of the civilian population itself, we find that a large area of the country, represented not only by the twenty mile defensive strip round the coast, but also by centres of population which are particularly exposed to enemy attack, has been condemned to a state of stagnation. Its part in the national consumption of industrial products, commodities and foodstuffs has been forcibly decreased. Real estate values have declined, the rateable yield of properties has disappeared, the cost of local administration and local government, even on the limited scale imposed by war conditions in those protected areas, is now beyond the capacity of the remaining civilian population to deal with it. Again, enrolment in the army of the greater part of our younger population on a strict age basis has removed from the civilian sector a large proportion of its creative and executive capacity, with the result that the machinery of the State, outside the army, is less efficient and certainly less productive than it was a year ago.

In a totalitarian state, those difficulties would be solved by drafting the entire population into the army, taking over control of the entire industrial and economic production of the country, with the adoption of rationing of every commodity, the Government being responsible for production and distribution at every stage from agriculture onwards. A policy based on action of this kind would be logical war policy, but it would only work if the country in question could support itself, feed itself and supply from its own resources the material it requires for the conduct of the war and for the maintenance of industrial production, and could insulate itself financially

from the rest of the world. That combination of circumstances, however, is impossible in Great Britain, so that the solution of the problem in this country is not to make a slavish imitation of the German practice. Such an imitation might remove some difficulties; it would not touch the main problems. The consequence is that we require a degree of planning and executive ability in this country, in order to overcome our very serious disadvantages, beyond anything that has been shown by any member or any department of the present Government—beyond even that shown in Germany.

To what extent can the war effort be sustained indefinitely by the civilian population? We know that, in the last war, the total number of workers employed directly and indirectly on munitions and allied activities was in the vicinity of five million, and at its most the army accounted for well over three million, leaving about three million available to meet the requirements of the state other than munitions. Even so, we reached the position in the last war towards the middle of 1918 when we had practically no additional man power available for the army, after having combed out the surplus from the industrial establishments.

In the last war, however, our effective and potential resources were very much greater than they are in this war, the definition of resources being not so much productive capacity in metals, minerals and agricultural products outside Great Britain, as the reserves available for taxation in the income and production of the country as a whole, combined with the free assets available for the financing of imports, mainly from the United States. The taxation possibilities of the country were not fully developed, or only very partially developed, our foreign securities were only partly mobilized, and the entrance of America into the war meant the conservation of our assets in the United States. The national debt, even at the end of the war, was less than £8,000,000,000, or rather less than half the total national wealth. Even so, the conclusion of the war left this country in the position where it was in effect unable to finance recovery to any serious degree, and it remained unable to finance it during the whole of the post-war period.

In 1940, on the other hand, we have come close to the limits of taxation. The additional State income available from income tax has been reduced to a comparatively small sum. If income tax was raised to 10s. in the £ and supertax were to operate from incomes of £1,000 or £1,500 onwards, it is doubt-



ful whether the yield would produce sufficient to keep the war going for three weeks. The margin of national earnings available for investment in the national loans has been reduced to vanishing point as the result of the collapse in interest rates. The income from investment has now been reduced so low that there is no surplus available from investment and the stage has been reached in quite considerable sectors of the population where capital itself is being realized in an attempt to maintain the previous standard of living. The total volume of industrial production during this war is showing every indication of being rather less than in 1938 or 1939, and, in effect, less as a percentage of peace-time production than it was in 1914-18.

One may, in a short time, reach the following position:—

National Income	-	-	-	£6,000,000,000
National Production (industrial)	-	-	-	5,000,000,000
National Budget	-	-	-	4,000,000,000
National Production for War Purposes	-	-	-	3,400,000,000
National Wealth	-	-	-	24,000,000,000
National Debt	-	-	-	16,000,000,000
National Realizable Assets (in U.S.A.)	-	-	-	1,500,000,000
Already Pledged by Purchasing Commission	-	-	-	1,500,000,000

The significance of this position, when it will have been reached, can be understood from the figures. They are admittedly very approximate, and the estimate of the assets available in the U.S.A. may be rather on the low side, while the deliveries from the U.S.A. bear no sort of relationship to the value of the orders placed by the Purchasing Commission, so that deliveries represented by those assets tend to spread over a long period which may, in effect, be longer than the war. Nevertheless, if those assets are pledged by the Purchasing Commission, they are not available for use in any other direction.

If the national debt approximates to the national wealth and our foreign assets are already pledged, if our national production leaves only a margin of about one third for the civilian population, while the national budget covers anything up to 70% of the national income, how is it possible either to finance the war effort indefinitely or, what is more important put aside sufficient reserve for the reconstruction of the country when peace is declared? How is it possible to increase taxation without affecting the section of national production devoted entirely to state requirements? Such taxation must inevitably cause inflation, distort prices and increase costs, eliminate income from excess profits duty, cause widespread

poverty and destruction of production values. The present chaos in agricultural prices is a reflection of the excessive cost of munitions and war production generally. Admittedly, the capacity of the country to borrow money is unlimited, in the sense that it is impossible to put a well organized state into bankruptcy, but such financing can only be carried out by the creation of paper assets which have no foundation in real assets.

In its final evolution the war may have no armies at all and the struggle may take place purely on the economic front. If that is the case, the capacity of any country to maintain a war will not depend on its power to raise large armies and maintain them in the field, but on its power to reduce to a minimum its direct commitments in the field in favour of concentration of resources and administrative capacity on an economic war based on the productive strength of the country. In other words, the belligerents will use their fighting services, not to destroy each other, but to paralyse their civilian production so greatly that the business of maintaining the population will become extremely difficult, if not impossible.

The administration of our national life involves the solution of a series of very critical problems. One may assume that the business of organization for existing war production is already being carried out efficiently; that the machinery necessary for the preservation of the civilian population and the satisfaction of its basic requirements is functioning without friction and without loss; that the actual financing of expenditure is being carried out by the Treasury and by the various Government departments concerned without any impairment of the national credit; that the volume of our foreign trade has not been notably reduced as a result of the European blockade and that some income is still available from our shipping services and from our investments overseas that is not pledged by the Purchasing Commission in the United States.

Evidence does not go to prove that there is any real basis for those assumptions, but there is no reason why the national effort should not be organized to make those assumptions true. What cannot be carried out by the existing machinery of the State and cannot be resolved by a mere manipulation of our resources and the application of traditional methods and traditional formulæ, is the economic reconstruction of the country and the arrest of economic deterioration which is already spreading over a considerable proportion of national life not under the immediate control of the war machine.



This difficulty is not confined to Great Britain—it covers the Dominions as well. The Dominions have pledged their resources in some cases to an even greater degree than Great Britain, and they are dependent on this country in peace as in war for their existence. Their industrial and financial strength is even as fully engaged. This observation applies particularly to Canada, Australia and New Zealand; it does not apply to South Africa, but will in a short time when the Italian advance towards South Africa will have developed in strength, and the assets of the Irish Free State and India are not heavily engaged, but those two countries should be considered in this conflict as outside the British Empire altogether.

What provision is being made to ensure that some margin in taxation and in financial resources is being rendered available for the reconstruction of the country? What control is being exerted over the use of our man power to ensure that the transition to peace will not be accompanied by widespread unemployment incapable of amelioration owing to the lack of a nucleus of skilled men in civilian occupations and the absence of productive machinery sufficient to absorb man power rendered available by early demobilization? What plans are in existence to ensure the conversion of factories engaged in war production to the most elementary forms of civilian industrial and commercial demand?

It is useless to assume that financial values and income derived from financial operations will do anything but play an infinitesimal part in the rebuilding of post-war Great Britain. The surplus created by 150 years of capitalistic enterprise, both in this country and overseas, will have been completely dissipated by the combination of the two wars. We must, through the available machinery, form a national plan which will, through the careful and exact application of our industrial power, and the natural resources within our control, ensure the maintenance of a reasonable standard of living for the population. If we do not work out the essentials of such a policy now, there is nothing in front of us but the collapse of the machinery of the State, the incidence of widespread unemployment, the chaos of mis-directed and dangerous revolution and the repetition to a more painful degree of the experiences of Russia between 1917 and 1939 when the country was emerging from a state of collapse and social disintegration. The attitude of the Government still remains that their business at present is to concentrate on war production and put

those other questions aside, ignorant of the fact that if the war production and application of our national resources to such production is not subjected to the most careful administration, it may create a situation so dangerous that any possibility of post-war reconstruction is ruled out.

As a nation we are working on very narrow margins indeed, a fact which does not appear to have dawned on our administrators, who still assume that the surpluses which were available at the beginning of the last war to make good deficiencies in organizing capacity are available in even greater degree in this war. The conclusions made by economists have to some extent been responsible for this attitude. Comparisons have been made of material resources of the whole British Empire with the material resources of the enemy in order to show the vast superiority of the former, but such a comparison has no significance if the assets cannot be realized, and when realized are not such as to satisfy all the requirements of a State at war and a State at peace.

The question is insistent—is it possible for us, without any reference to what is or is not available to the enemy, to ensure that our own resources and our own organizing capacity are such as to make good the losses and the deterioration caused by the war? The methods and proposals of the present Government, particularly on the financial side, show no appreciation of the danger inherent in the situation, and vague promises of planning for reconstruction purposes, of extensive control of our industrial and financial effort, in the sense that some surplus will be available for post-war reconstructive effort, show that the Government is unwilling to face up to the consequences of its own indecision.

This war is not so much a struggle between two empires as the beginning of a new world order. It is our obligation, even during the period of hostilities, to lay the foundations of such an order, having regard not to the requirements of one year or even five years, but to the future which must be measured in units of time greater than even decades. While it may be possible to withstand and even neutralize the attacks made in a military sense, the war will be lost if this country is reduced to the same state of exhaustion as Germany at its conclusion. Our civilization will be lost if we have so exhausted our resources that we are unable to replan our national life and utilize to the full our man power.



## THE PROBLEMS OF FOOD RELIEF

BY PROFESSOR A. L. GOODHART

THE supply of food to enemy-occupied territories raises problems which are well illustrated by events during the last war. It has been too readily assumed that no difficulties were encountered then and that such relief was given as a matter of course. We have failed to remember that owing to the recalcitrant position assumed by the German and Austrian Governments no help was allowed to reach the starving millions in Poland and Serbia, and that even in Belgium and northern France things did not run as smoothly as we are now inclined to believe.

The story of the abortive attempts to relieve Poland is particularly illuminating. The facts can be found in Command Papers 24 and 32 presented to Parliament in July and September, 1916, in which the correspondence respecting Polish relief is set out.

The negotiations began in the spring of 1915 when the American Ambassador in London enquired on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation whether the Allies were prepared to allow foodstuffs to be imported into Poland, parts of which were then threatened with starvation. The Allies assented to the proposal provided that the United States Government should officially assume responsibility for the proper carrying out of the work. Before further steps could be taken the sinking of the *Lusitania* occurred, and as a result of the protests then made by the United States Government, the officials at Berlin informed the Rockefeller Foundation that they could admit no relief into Poland under American control. In this connection it is interesting to note that the Germans argued that the destruction of the *Lusitania* was a justifiable act of reprisal against Great Britain for "her inhuman attempt to starve the civil population of Germany by means of an unlawful blockade".

During the summer of 1915 the situation in Poland became steadily worse as Germany and its ally Austria systematically drained the country of its food supplies both by wholesale requisitions of foodstuffs for their armies and by setting up

"Import Companies" which removed large stocks, especially into Austria. On December 22, 1915, Mr. Herbert Hoover of the Commission for Relief in Belgium sent a letter to Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in which he stated that the German authorities had assured him that although a minimum ration could be provided in Poland, there was such a shortage of fats that there was a critical danger of incipient famine diseases. The German authorities, he said, were prepared to guarantee that any imported food would be used exclusively for the civil population, and that they would permit the distribution to be carried out by the Belgium Relief Commission. On February 5, 1916, Sir Edward Grey replied to Mr. Hoover that no scheme of relief could be accepted "until the German and Austrian Governments have prohibited the export of all foodstuffs from Russian Poland, and have guaranteed that native stocks of foodstuffs shall not be drawn upon to maintain the occupying armies".

No specific reply to this was ever received from Berlin, but on February 21, 1916, the American Ambassador in London presented a draft proposal in which the German Government seemed, at first sight, to agree to most of the conditions required by the Allies. Why then did the negotiations break down?

The crucial point was that the German and Austrian Governments refused to deal with Poland as an undivided whole. In effect they were asking that those parts of Poland which were largely industrialized should be fed by the relief organizations, while those parts which were entirely agricultural should deliver all their surplus produce to the Central Empires. They attempted to justify this on the ground that in the division of Poland the industrial part had been assigned to Germany, and was effectively separated from the remainder which was in Austrian hands. They ignored the fact that before the war the Polish cities had been fed by the natural agricultural hinterland, and that there would be little need for relief if this commerce were allowed to continue.

On May 10, 1916, Viscount Grey (as he had then become) wrote to the American Ambassador a memorandum in which he repeated that Poland must be dealt with as a unit, that the Germany Army and constabulary in the occupied territories should not use native supplies, and that the Central Empires should care for the populations of Serbia, Albania and Montenegro which were being reduced to a state of starvation by the removal of their native foodstuffs.



On June 1, 1916, a telegram was received from the American Ambassador in Berlin stating that the German Government could only contract as to Polish territory in its own control, but that it would use its good offices with Austria concerning Serbian relief. On June 15, Viscount Grey repeated for the third time the Allies' demand that the Central Empires must deal with Poland as a whole before any further step could be taken. No reply to this note was made by the German Government, but instead it began a violent propaganda campaign in which it accused France and England of starving Poland.

The final steps in this dreary story were taken when on July 8, 1916, the United States Government officially appealed to all the belligerents to arrange for the relief of Poland. To this appeal Viscount Grey replied on July 26 that the Allied Governments were prepared to relieve all occupied territories indefinitely, provided that the enemy would reserve all produce of the soil of such territories for the inhabitants, and they asked the President of the United States to nominate neutrals to undertake the work of relief. This offer, which is printed as an appendix at the end of this article, was categorically refused by the German Government on July 29, and the negotiations were brought to an end on the ground that relief work was now too late. The German note ended with the characteristic statement, that, owing to the efforts of the Imperial Government, "relief action after October 1, 1916, can apparently be dispensed with".

The history of these futile negotiations was summed up by Viscount Grey in the following words:

In my opinion the negotiations have thus reached the conclusion which the German Government intended that they should reach. There has never been any intention on the part of the enemy to fulfil the obligations resting upon them under the rules of war, as recognized by all civilized countries, towards the inhabitants of the territories occupied by their armies, and their purpose in the whole negotiations was only to confuse issues and throw the greatest possible amount of odium upon the Allies. The whole discussion, so far as the German and Austrian Governments are concerned, has been only one move in a deep policy of exciting public opinion against the legitimate use of sea power by those who are fighting for the principle of nationality, and, so long as the Central Empires hold any territory belonging to the Allies, they will continue to use the civilians in a thousand towns and villages in France and Belgium, not as non-combatants to be protected, but as hostages and as forced labourers.

How throughout the rest of the war Germany exploited the unfortunate Polish people and in what a ravaged state she

left that country at the time of the armistice in 1918 need not be described here.

Unlike the unsuccessful Polish negotiations, the attempts to relieve Belgium and northern France achieved a striking success. Their history is centred in that of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, the chairman of which was Mr. Herbert Hoover. His work has been admirably described by Dr. Vernon Kellogg, director in Belgium until 1917, in his book *Herbert Hoover* (1920).

Shortly after the war began in 1914 the food situation in Belgium became desperate. Unlike Poland, Belgium is a highly industrialized nation, and at that time she had only limited stocks of food, large parts of which were seized by the invading German army. There never was any real hope that the Germans themselves would do anything to aid the Belgians, for, as Dr. Kellogg has said, "the Germans would do nothing to help them. Indeed, everything the Germans did was to make matters worse". After various negotiations between the belligerent governments it was agreed in October, 1914, that the Commission for Relief in Belgium should be allowed to import food into that country, with suitable guarantees that this should be reserved for the civilian population. One of the major problems was the financial one as the Germans refused to allow any Belgian money to leave the country for the purchase of food. As a result Belgian relief cost the Allies and the United States over £200,000,000 during the course of the war. The money came from government subventions about equally divided between England and France. Later when the United States came into the war, that country made all the advances. A separate sum of over £10,000,000 for purely charitable purposes was raised by private subscriptions. Concerning this, Dr. Kellogg stated: "Of the money and goods for benevolence that came from outside sources more than one-third came from England and the British Dominions—New Zealand gave more money per capita for Belgian relief than any other country—while the rest came chiefly from the United States, a small fraction coming from other countries." The Germans seemed to have had some difficulty in realizing that this help was really altruistic. "But the Germans", said Dr. Kellogg, "never really understood us. One day as Hoover was finishing a conversation with the head of the German Pass-Zentral in Brussels, the German officer said: 'Well, now tell me, Herr



## THE PROBLEMS OF FOOD RELIEF

Hoover, as man to man, what do you get out of all this? You are not doing all this for nothing, surely'."

The Germans, on the other hand, instead of helping the work of the Commission, tried in every way to obtain unfair advantages. Although Holland was anxious to help its starving neighbour, the Germans kept out food from this source with a ring of bayonets and an electrified wire fence. "Germany looked on Holland," said Dr. Kellogg, "as a storehouse of food which might some time, in some way, despite Allied pressure on the Dutch Government, become available to Germany. Although the French children were suffering terribly, and ceasing all growth and development for lack of the tissue-building foods, the Germans preferred not to let us help them with the Dutch food but to cling to their long chance of sometime getting it for themselves." More patently dishonest was the attempt made by the Germans in 1915 to seize for themselves part of the Belgian and French harvests. In 1916 they suddenly seized the Belgian canal-boat fleet in which the relief food was brought from Rotterdam, demanding that the Relief Commission should deposit a large sum of money as a guarantee for each boat. This attempted blackmail was only defeated after strenuous negotiations on the part of Mr. Hoover.\* In 1917 the German submarines sank a number of relief ships. On this point Professor James W. Garner, a leading American authority on International Law has written (*International Law and the World War*, vol. I. p. 330) as follows:

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the German war upon Belgian relief ships was wanton and indiscriminate, and that it was based on the assumption that every neutral vessel sunk and every cargo of food stuffs destroyed reduced in that proportion the available world's supply, and would, in the end, inure to the military advantage of Germany.

It afforded undisputed proof, if further proof were needed, that the German Government could not be trusted to keep its promises or observe its engagements with other governments, and that with it the sacred principles of humanity must, in the language of the German war manual and German text writers, yield to 'whatever contributes to the attainments of the object of the war'.

In that same year the Germans, in their Somme retreat, evacuated part of the territory in northern France which they

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\*Two of the German representatives with whom Mr. Hoover had to deal were Baron von der Lancken and Dr. Rieth. After the Armistice they sent Mr. Hoover a telegram asking him to help Germany. He sent the following reply: "Mr. Hoover's personal compliments and request to go to Hell. If Mr. Hoover has to deal with Germany for the Allies it will at least not be with such a precious pair of scoundrels." (Kellogg, p. 161).

had occupied since 1914. The French Government, protesting against the wanton destruction of the trees and crops, said, "The inhabitants, relatively few in number, who have not been removed have been left with a minimum of rations while the enemy seized stocks supplied by the neutral revictualling commission which were destined for the civil population". (See Fanchille: *L'Evacuation des Territoires Occupés par l'Allemagne dans le Nord de la France*). Finally as the blockade of Germany became more effective, the policy of requisitions in the occupied territories was pushed to the extreme limit. "By the spring of 1918", says Professor Garner (Vol. II, p. 120), "it appears to have degenerated into a system of indiscriminate pillage. Factories were dismantled, growing crops in the fields were requisitioned, and nearly all the livestock in the occupied regions was carried off, . . .". Thus when the Germans felt that the situation had become desperate they ignored the guarantees they had given against seizing native food.

It is hardly surprising to find that Dr. Kellogg sums up the feelings of the American relief workers in these words: "But it was a hard struggle to maintain the correctly neutral behaviour which we were under obligation to do. And when the end of this strain came, which was when America entered the War, and the inside Americans had to go out, they all, almost to a man, rushed to the trenches to make their protest, with gun in hand, against German Kultur as it had been exemplified under their eyes in Belgium."

It is unnecessary to add here to the list of German violations except to mention one most important point. When the Belgium Relief Commission began its work in 1914 the German Government still seemed to recognize that under the rules of International Law it owed certain duties to the inhabitants of the occupied territories. It was only two years later that the Germans adopted their policy of mass deportations and enforced labour. It was then that the German minister of war, von Stein, said: "To-day it is not armies alone who face each other, but peoples. One cannot leave among his enemies labourers to carry on agriculture and make munitions of war. We have not deported young girls alone, but all the population capable of working" (Garner, Vol. I, p. 319). When the Allies had originally undertaken that food relief should be sent to Belgium, one of the strongest arguments that had induced them to take this course was that otherwise the inhabitants would be forced by hunger to work for the Germans (Kellogg,



p. 155). Unfortunately things did not turn out as they had planned, because towards the end of the war the Germans had found other means of forcing the people, who were being fed by the Relief Commission, to do war work for them.

This story of food relief during the last war has not been told here for the purpose of stirring up prejudice against the Germans—there are enough present grounds for this without going back to earlier ones—but to illustrate their methods and to show how they regard their duties to the inhabitants of the occupied territories. It is interesting that the Germans, who have never been noted for the originality of their thoughts, are in 1940 repeating exactly the same arguments which they adopted in 1914-18 although they were then conclusively repudiated by the Governments of France, England and the United States. In the same way they are taking food from those countries which have a surplus, but are refusing to give any supplies to those, such as Poland and Belgium, which may shortly be on the brink of starvation owing to the ravages of the German armies. They have even divided France into two parts, as they did with Poland in 1915, and are refusing to let the one part send food to the other, although no danger of food shortage could arise if France were dealt with as a unit. The Germans also are repeating the brutal doctrine that they owe no duty to the people of the occupied territories who, according to von Clausewitz's traditional policy, may be exploited in a thorough and ruthless manner for the benefit of the invader. Finally, the whole question has been so befogged by German lies—a weaker word would not do justice to the energy of their propaganda—that many people are left uncertain as to what the facts really are. It was of a similar difficulty that Viscount Grey spoke in 1916 when he said :

This was only one instance of the difficulty which the Allied Governments have always had to face in dealing with these relief questions, viz., that in spite of the statements of American philanthropists, and in spite of the appeals apparently made to them by German and Austrian officials, depicting the certainty of starvation in the absence of imported supplies, the enemy Governments have, nevertheless, constantly published official statements in their press, minimizing the necessity for relief, boasting of the measures that they had taken to deal with the food problem, and speaking with contemptuous tolerance of the activities of American relief societies.

One true fact, however, emerges clearly from the present German statements which cannot be repeated too frequently—there need be no food shortage in the occupied territories if Germany will distribute it on a fair and equal basis. To what

extent she will do this will depend not on any humanitarian motives or on any sense of duty, but solely on calculation of self-interest. But of one thing we can be certain,—as in the last war, so to-day she will attempt to escape all responsibility for her own acts of aggression by raising the facile and misleading cry that her enemies are starving women and children, women and children who would now be living in peace and happiness if it were not for the Nazi terror.

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### *Appendix*

The final Allied proposal made on July 26, 1916, reads as follows, (Cmd. 24, p. 2):

If the German and Austro-Hungarian Governments will reserve wholly to the civil populations of the territories which their armies have occupied—viz., Belgium, Northern France, Poland, Serbia, Montenegro, and Albania—the entire produce of the soil, all livestock, and all stocks of food, fodder, or fertilizers in those territories; if they will admit to those territories neutrals selected by the President of the United States, with full powers to control the distribution of food to the whole population and to transfer, when necessary and possible, from one territory to another surplus stocks existing in the one and lacking in the other; and if the President of the United States will undertake the selection of these neutral agents, His Majesty's Government will, on their part, give them every assistance in their power, and will admit into such territories any imported food supplies necessary to supplement native stocks and to afford to the populations a fair subsistence ration, so long as they are satisfied that their enemies are scrupulously observing their part of the agreement.



## WILL WE EVER LEARN? \*

By R. R. STOKES, M.P.

“THE same old men who ruined the world for my father have now ruined it for me. They must not be allowed to lose the next peace.”

So wrote a young conscript in my constituency on the day he was called up for military service. Surely a big responsibility rests on us to see to it that the millions who die or are maimed for life in this war do not suffer in vain as did the millions of my contemporaries in the 1914-18 war; for having won the war their elders lost the peace and it is tragic irony that for the most part those same elders, who know little or nothing from personal experience about the horrors the soldier faces, have blundered us into another and worse Armageddon.

When this war is over those who have fought it must see with those who fought in 1914-18 that the proper kind of reconstruction is put in hand forthwith. We are greatly to blame that the tremendous feeling of co-operation and identity of purpose that existed on the battlefield was thrown away forgotten. It has come to the fore again amongst workers and soldiers alike in a most inspiring way and when hostilities have ceased it must be preserved and harnessed to the chariot of reconstruction for the common good.

What kind of world do we want? Do we want the world in general and Europe in particular carved up into small states each vying with one another for points of advantage and by this very competition making the peoples of the world the slaves of their rulers instead of the rulers being the servants of the people? Do we intend to allow a return to the state of things wherein the people of one country are persuaded that all the evils they suffer are the fault of the people of another, so ensuring that the workers of the world will never unite but instead fight one another? Do we propose to return to the

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\*Much of the argument in this article has already been used by Mr. Stokes in his contribution to *After the War*—a symposium of Peace Aims under the general editorship of William Teeling. *Sidgwick and Jackson*. 12s. 6d.

mock democracy we have experienced hitherto—a democracy which was really the right to be free to starve and do without? Do we realize that when the war started there were nearly two million able-bodied unemployed in Great Britain and nearly ten million in the U.S.A.? That owing to this competition for work wages were forced down to the lowest possible level so that even the millions in employment were in receipt of but a fraction of what they really could receive under a just economic system? Do we appreciate that in Russia, in Italy and in Germany to-day—even in this country, and the United States—some men play the tune to which all men must dance? Democracy as we have known it has been a failure simply because certain fundamental principles have been skilfully ignored by the ruling classes—and their ability so to ignore them has been due to the ignorance of the masses.

We want a new democracy where none may want and all may have the full product of their labour—with liberty and justice to all; where men shall cease to spend their lives in a dire and unfair struggle for existence, whilst the fortunate few heap up things they cannot take away with them when their tenancy of this earth runs out. We want a new society of the peoples of the earth wherein all may be free and enjoy economic security if they have but the will and opportunity. In short we want the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God. How are we to attain it?

It must be apparent that the problem confronting the business man is almost identical with that which confronts the working man. The business man or factory owner spends his life in a struggle to keep his works full and men employed: he can only do this provided the demand from the communities of the world (i.e. the workers the world over) keep up. That demand can only keep up provided the workers of the world are allowed to use their effort to meet their own needs and dispose of the surplus they produce in exchange for goods which they themselves need but do not produce. None of the workers is satisfied with what he has got; millions of them are unemployed and living on the margin of subsistence—all want more—whilst the factory owner struggles along striving to grab orders away from his competitors. The labourer suffers economic insecurity and the employer wears himself out in most cases earning a miserably small return on the effort expended. Why should it be so? Is there no better way? How much longer must we endure the nonsensical boom-slump



system? No one man is capable of meeting all his own desires by his own effort and it therefore follows that the greater the number of people the larger this out of balance figure of goods desired should become. With the obstacles removed from production, exchange and finance there should never be a slump.

I visualize a state of things wherein the demand for goods is permanently on the increase, thereby keeping factories full, unemployment exchanges empty, no unskilled men because there will be an inexhaustible demand for skilled labour and for that very reason wages will rise to their proper level and in fact all will be free securely to maintain practice in their chosen art. It is the unemployed man at the factory gate who keeps wages down—not the employer who under this unjust system is as helpless to put things right as the unemployed man himself. Imagine a state of society with more jobs than people—the worker could then have choice of jobs and would himself be master of the terms offered him within the limits of a just system. With factories full the employer would have no need to spend the colossal sums now necessary in the exertion of selling effort and sales staff. Freed from the bugbear of insecurity of employment everyone would have time to give thought to the higher things of life—what a contrast with what everyone who works has hitherto had to endure!

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What are we fighting to attain in the present war? It is vitally important that there should be a clear definition between what we are fighting *against* and what we are fighting *for*. So far Government spokesmen have done nothing more than reiterate *ad nauseam* that we are fighting to end aggression but not one of them has stated positive aims. We *are* fighting against aggression—we all know that. But consider what we are fighting to attain—and unless this is properly understood when the war ends there will be just the same disillusion and disappointment as there was after the 1914-18 war. Are we fighting to leave the workers where hitherto they have always been, struggling for existence on a low wage, insecure in their employment and only receiving an unfair proportion of what they produce? We should fight to change all that and to bring in a new era of economic security and prosperity for all with no enforced unemployment.

Just what is it that stands in the way? There are two main obstacles and two main channels down which the wealth

produced is now drained away—the moneylenders and the landowners. The strangling power of both must be limited before economic security is possible; the present power which the moneylender has of privately controlling the issue of money (currency) and that of the landlord of appropriating rent must be abolished.

At the Mansion House on January 9, 1940, Mr. Chamberlain at the beginning of his speech stated that the Empire was united as never before to do battle for “the cause of liberty and justice for all mankind”. A high-sounding phrase but did he or his party mean it? Do they really mean that we are fighting this war in order that all men may have justice secured to them in the only form that matters, namely economic security? Or do they merely mean that the rulers of each nation, including our own, may thereafter be free to go their own way provided they do not interfere with the rulers of any other nation? If this latter is all that they mean—fighting just to perpetuate the boom-slump system, the moneylenders\* robbery, the landlords’ monopoly, and to maintain the slums of Glasgow and London, while the fourteen million workers struggling for a miserable pittance are never sure of work, and millions more limp along on the dole in a state of utter wretchedness and semi-starvation—then it is just not good enough. What we want to hear from Mr. Churchill is that our rulers have renounced their belief that poverty and war are inevitable, and that they will here and now guarantee that in so far as in them lies, our own social system shall be so reconstructed by freeing the resources of nature and ending the currency scandal, that to the limit of the physical capacity of the country to produce all men shall enjoy the full result of their effort, free from the artificial restrictions imposed by dog-in-the-manger landlords and usurious and greedy moneylenders.

Is there a country with more idle acres than England? I have travelled far and wide—at one time not less than 30,000 miles a year—and whilst I think our country the best and most beautiful I can remember no other nation that allows its natural resources to be left in idleness as we do. Travel where you like in Europe and every inch capable of being cultivated is turned to good purpose. But Mr. Chamberlain told us at Kettering

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\*By “moneylenders” I mean the system whereby the banks create money out of nothing for the purpose of financing the needs of the State and demand from the community repayment and interest for this privileged “service”! I am not referring to those people whose genuine savings are lent to the State or invested in industrial concerns.

in 1938 that we must not grow more food for ourselves as that would interfere with the flow of manufactured goods to other countries in exchange for the food they now send us, the value of which is, in fact, far in excess of the manufactured goods exported so as to enable interest to be paid by the importing countries to the moneylenders for their overseas investments—no doubt to the advantage of the moneylender but to the disadvantage of the home agriculturist and the people of these isles as a whole. Is the feeding of our own people from our own supplies resulting from the proper use of our own home resources more or less important than paying interest to moneylenders? The question answers itself.

Why is a country that exports more than it imports considered to have a favourable trade balance, whereas if it imports more than it exports the balance is called unfavourable? Surely this is madness. If you send more produced wealth out of your country than you take back in goods from other countries, you must be poorer, if words have any meaning, and richer if you take more goods in than you send out.

When the 1914-18 war started the National Debt was under £650,000,000. By the end of that war it was nearly £7,000,000,000, and it is now over £8,000,000,000, seven-eighths of which is internal. Spending as we are to-day at the rate of £60,000,000 a week that debt will grow by over £3,000,000,000 a year—against which the total savings of the people do not exceed £500,000,000 a year. If the war goes on for three years the debt will be say £15,000,000,000. The service on our present debt is £250,000,000. It naturally depends on the rate of interest charged, but it would seem that £450,000,000 a year is what we shall have to pay to the moneylenders when the war is over unless we can finance this war on debt-free and interest-free money! For what?

When a private individual wants to borrow money to finance some enterprise he naturally expects to have to pay some premium in the form of interest to the person from whom he borrows. He is in fact borrowing the other man's credit and rightly pays for that accommodation and willingly does so. But when the Chancellor of the Exchequer requires to borrow vast sums for the Nation's needs what does he in effect do? He goes to the Central Bank (The Bank of England—a privately owned and controlled institution the names of whose shareholders are not published and the whole of whose activities are shrouded in mystery) and asks for it. Mr. Montagu



Norman very naturally enquires, "Mr. Chancellor, what is your credit?" To which the Chancellor in effect replies, "The whole of Great Britain, all its fixed assets, all the work of all the people, and a great deal more besides". Whereupon Mr. Norman says, "Very good, Mr. Chancellor, but of course you must pay us interest of  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ ". So up goes the National Debt by £3,000,000,000 and the interest charged (without sinking fund) a further annual amount of £75,000,000, and the money-lenders get this for what? For lending the nation something which they themselves haven't got!—i.e. they merely write the Chancellor up in the ledger as good for that amount. Can you understand why from the nation's point of view it is bad business to issue free money to the amount required to finance the war whilst if necessary restricting interest bearing credit elsewhere, whereas it is sound finance if the nation has to pay anything from  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  to  $5\%$  *for its own credit*?

The burden on the 14,000,000 registered workers on account of the National Debt amount to a dead weight of £600 per head and an annual charge of £20 per head. At the same rate after three years of war the dead weight will be £1,100 per head and the annual charge nearly £40.

Now that the Government control the Banks there is no reason whatever why loans should be issued at least for our internal needs. All that the Government need do is to open credits for manufacturers which can be cancelled less the amount of profit—the wages of management—agreed upon when the job is finished. If at the same time rationing of all essentials and strict price control is maintained, there will be no need to take the savings of the people for financing the war. They can store their savings in their stockings just as safely and spend them when the war is over and we have got back on to the production of things we all want in place of engines of destruction. Rationing and price control will of course have to continue when the war is over until this peacetime production has been organized and goods become available. The people should rise in their wrath and smite the Chancellor if he dares raise any further interest-bearing loans for our internal debt.

A word here on inflation: few people know what it means. When workers are turned off from producing things which they all want to consume on to making munitions, which are of no personal use to them and for doing so are in fact paid higher wages than they normally receive, they find that with

an increased amount of purchasing power at their disposal competing for a diminishing volume of consumer goods prices do in fact rise unless strict price control is exercised. Last war the distributors and producers took advantage of this surplus demand by putting prices up and selling to the highest bidder. In consequence wages rose to meet the higher cost of living and so on. This became known as the vicious spiral of inflation! But there is no need for it if the Government take proper control in the way I have described by rationing and strict price regulation. Inflation—vulgarly called “wind in the national belly”—means an increase in the amount of money in circulation without a corresponding increase in the quantity of consumer goods.

The last war was in fact paid for at the time by the sweat and blood of the people who fought it whether on the field of battle or in the factory. The financiers who control our Government were cunning enough however to create a vast book debt running up to £7,000,000,000 on which interest has since been paid amounting to £5,600,000,000. So we have almost paid off the capital sum in interest yet we still have this appalling debt of £8,000,000,000 round our necks. Is this to happen again? It will be our fault if we let it.

Why unemployment? Who creates demand? Why man himself, not the moneylenders or the landlords both of whom are parasites\* of the first order. Man is the only insatiable animal, therefore the limit to which his insatiety can be met should be only the limit which nature sets to the production of the good things he wants. Nature does not in practice prove niggardly—her storehouse is full. We burn crops in Canada, cotton in America, coffee in Brazil and even in our own country (in wartime!) throw fish back into the sea or spread it on the land for manure, while people starve in the cities.

This story has its moral:

There was once a Sultan who had great difficulty in raising sufficient funds to finance his armies, so he put a tax on fig trees and the value of dwelling houses, whereon the farmers cut down all the fig trees except those which they required for feeding themselves, and the landlords allowed the houses to fall into disrepair so as to be liable to less tax, with the result that the people lived in squalor and starved in the cities, the armies went weak from shortage of food and the Sultan still could not collect enough to run his country. But he had a very wise Grand Vizier who said to him, ‘Tax not the fig trees or the houses, but tax all the land of your kingdom according to its value, so that it will be unprofitable for the

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\*In botany a “parasite” is defined as “a plant growing upon and nourished by the juices of another”.

farmers not to grow food, or the town landlords to maintain smelly hovels in the slums.' So the Sultan cancelled the tax on fig trees and houses and put it on land values instead, whereon all the farmers who owned land quickly grew fig trees, there was plenty and cheap food for all in the cities, the men in the army waxed strong, the town landlords had to clear the slums as they could not afford to leave hovels on valuable land, and the Sultan's enemies feared to attack seeing such strength and such a happy contented population.

What happens in England? The land is under the undisputed control of a few people and the rest of the community must pay before they may use it. Even now the Army and Air Force are paying fabulous prices for land, much of which has hitherto been regarded as worthless—the landlords saying in effect to the soldier, 'Join up and fight for your country, but before you do so you must buy it back from us. Pay for your country before you die for it.

All the things that man wants come from the land, and land in fact itself has no value without the presence of human beings. The *capital* value of land, *without improvements*, in Great Britain, is no less a sum than £10,000,000,000 which at 5% should yield £500,000,000 so that if all land in Britain were put to its best use this latter is the sum which the landlords can collect free of all tax from the population in exchange for permission to work!—mind you for a value which the landlords themselves, from their mere ownership, whoever they may be, never created. This amounts to almost £40 per annum per head of registered workers, which added to the toll paid to moneylenders means that the worker has to provide £80 a year in the way of toll to the landlord and moneylender before he can have anything for himself.

But this is not the worst of it. Under our existing laws the landowner may either put land to its wrong use or not use it at all, without penalty to himself. So that you have this absurd position: two million able-bodied unemployed kicking their heels waiting for an opportunity to help themselves by their own effort to the things they need, millions of acres of land lying idle or being put to the wrong use with impunity, whilst the landlords live on the rent from such land as they are prepared graciously to allow the workers to use. The extent to which land is idle or not used to the best advantage is the *exact measure of the hardship* inflicted on the people as a whole by the landlord system. Tax each piece of land whether used or not according to its value and the owners of farm lands will behave exactly as the Sultan's farmers did over the fig trees



and the landlords over the slums—immediately set to work to get the maximum return from each piece of land and put up buildings commensurate with the value of the land on which they stand because it will be unprofitable to keep it idle. Idleness should be taxed *not effort*.

All that an enterprising business man requires to cure unemployment is first of all the opportunity to work and then the fund to carry that work out. Slums need clearing, roads widening, land reclaiming, garden cities building, etc., etc., but what always stands in the way? First the appalling ransom that has to be paid to the vested interest in land before a start can be made, then money has to be found by increased bank debt, and in the end much of the improvement resulting from expenditure of public funds passes away in value into the pockets of the owners of adjoining properties. Then when the next step is proposed the community are required to pay those owners enhanced values which the community itself *not the landlords* have created before the work can proceed—in fact the community has to pay twice for its own investment. Place a tax on land values now and with the certain knowledge that the improvements will accrue to the benefit of the community not the landlord and all the wonderful schemes of development can go ahead unhindered by landlords and by self-financing from the real wealth created as the work proceeds.

Given world economic security there can be no more wars. How are we to get it?

1. Land Monopoly—*i.e.*, the private appropriation of rent—must be abolished. This monopoly permits such institutions as the Prudential Assurance, Nuffield Trust, Abbey Road Building Society, Ecclesiastical Commission and Oxford and Cambridge Universities and Colleges to filch from the people £500,000,000 a year for the mere permission to use the land. A tax on land values would ensure that all land would speedily be brought into that use which best meets the needs of the community—be it playing fields, open spaces, garden cities or industrial sites.

2. Raw materials must no longer be monopolized in the interests of the few to the disadvantage of the many. Sir Samuel Hoare in September 1935 at Geneva said that the raw materials of the world must be made available for the peoples who need them. The first and last we heard of the great sane proposal from the Tory Government. Vested interests love dear scarcity and abhor cheap plenty, for there is no advantage to them in the latter.

3. The monetary system must be reformed and the power of the money-lender curtailed. A new currency system is needed based on the productive capacity of the real wealth of nations and not on gold, which will shortly be valueless except for wedding rings and tooth stoppings. The first step at home should be to take back to the State the right to create the currency

of the people—a right ceded to the Bank of England by a bankrupt king in the days of William and Mary.

4. Tariff barriers must be obliterated. The tariff is the policy of a bankrupt Government—bankrupt because of their inability or unwillingness to see that by freeing land from the dead hand of landlordism and the creation of credit from the restrictions of the Bankers their peoples would be free to produce according to their capacity to work and to consume to the value of their capacity to produce. A wise man once said, "You cannot have the British Empire as a closed trading corporation and have peace at the same time." We tried it through the Ottawa agreements, and we have got war. "Germany must export or die". So must Britain. Therefore, away with all tariffs as soon as possible. Our exports have fallen by 50 per cent. since tariffs were introduced in 1932, ostensibly for the purpose of curing unemployment, which they have not done and can never do. America with a huge tariff wall has 9,000,000 able-bodied unemployed!

5. A system which allows every nation, great or small, its own sovereignty must break down under modern conditions where time and space have virtually been destroyed by science and invention. It is as ridiculous to allow Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Belgium and Holland to settle their foreign policy, strength of armaments and tariff system to-day independently of one another as it would be to allow the counties of Kent, Sussex, Surrey and Middlesex to do so.

6. What all peoples desire, whatever the ambition of their rulers, is a warless world. Peace properly waged would be full of far greater adventures and hazards and promises of higher rewards than any war.

7. What is morally right is economically possible. Is it morally right that through no fault of their own there should be millions of unemployed with no proper means of subsistence? Obviously not: it is morally right that everyone should be given the opportunity to work to supply his own wants as God meant. As God meant it it must be economically possible.

8. Right thought must precede right action. It is, therefore, useless to continue our present educational system unless we introduce into the curriculum proper instruction in the essential terms used in political economy. How many people can *correctly* define the terms land, labour, capital, wealth, money, rent, wages and interest? Political economy is a simple study—by which I do not refer to the mumbo-jumbo talked by our leading so-called economists—a child can understand it as also the proper arrangement of society if not fogged with preconceived notions, prejudices and meaningless jargon.

9. All the tiresome restrictions on food production in existence prior to the war should remain suspended and the various marketing boards which are now mere price raising monopolies should be reconstituted with representatives of both consumers and producers whose main function shall be to organize adequate supplies at the cheapest possible cost. An era of "cheap plenty" must take the place of the Tory motto of "dear scarcity". The first duty of any Government is to feed the people.

People economically secure can then start to live the kind of life God meant when two thousand years ago He sent His Son to show them how to do it.

## THE END OF THE GENTLEMAN

BY GEOFFREY VICKERS

**E**QUALITY of educational opportunity has become a hackneyed phrase, but it remains as difficult as ever to say what it means. This is largely because at least three different kinds of inequality are at issue and few people are equally conscious of all three; whilst the one which seems to be attracting most attention at the moment is by all defensible criteria the least important.

The supposed plight of some of the public schools has focussed attention on the familiar fact that in England a child's education runs for its proper term only if one of two conditions are present—abnormal intelligence in the child or abnormal wealth in the parent. Corresponding with these oddly assorted conditions are two different roads to the Universities and the small but privileged paddocks beyond; one leads via the preparatory and public school, the other via the elementary and state aided secondary school. Professor Clarke has called them respectively "the free front door" and "the side entrance". The contrast between these avenues, the qualifications which admit to them and the advantages, material and otherwise, which result from them respectively, gives plenty of food for thought on the meaning of equality in educational opportunity.

Far more striking is the contrast in educational fate between these who are favoured in brains or wealth and the rest. The former are educated up to eighteen or more, the latter up to fourteen. This can be regarded either as contrast between the clever and the dull or as a contrast between the general run of the rich and the general run of the poor. Either contrast gives an educationist food for thought.

Finally—and to all but educationists most important—is the difference in material and social reward which attaches to different educational fates. This may be only partly an educational issue but it is one which educationists cannot ignore.

These three fields of inequality seem exceedingly diverse, but



the problems which they raise are inseparable. Consider the most topical—who (if anyone) should have the privilege (if it be a privilege) of going to a public school? The question raises a prior enquiry—what exactly is it which the public school has to offer? At the turn of the century the public schools offered something which was supposed to be a ‘pure’ education, but which was in fact a subtle blend of vocational and cultural training, well suited to the ruling class at that particular place and time. It was a preparation for the Government services and the professions; and at the same time it developed in the individual a set of attitudes towards himself, his fellows and authority so constant and so pronounced as to constitute one of the most recognizable human types in the world. The most determined experiments of the totalitarian states in standardizing human attitudes by education still look amateurish when compared with the effortless and unconscious achievement of the Thring-Arnold tradition.

When the State began to interest itself in higher education, it naturally tended to conceive its task—in practice if not in theory—to be issuing to the gifted children of the poor limited and diluted doses of the elixir which formed the staple diet of the rich. To-day the path of the side entrance is as wide, if not as smooth, as the path to the front door. But the characteristic set of ‘attitudes’ is not necessarily imparted by the way; and to this extent those who attain the house of privilege by the more arduous route may still find themselves in a different part of it from that on which the front door opens.

It is interesting to analyse these attitudes, their content, and—most important of all—how far they are imparted by the school. The characteristics of the public school product are not necessarily produced by the public school. The first headmaster of Rendcomb College—the only boarding school which has ever drawn its first pupils wholly from elementary schools and admitted fee-payers only later as an exceptional minority—has testified that his boys brought with them ready made from home their attitude towards authority. The elementary school boys thought of authority as ‘them’, the fee-payers thought of it as ‘us’. He has also testified that this difference in what is perhaps the most important of all social attitudes was wholly educated away. The boys who left Rendcomb, whatever their origin, had come to regard themselves as heirs of the Kingdom.

For the moment however the points which I want to

emphasize are different. The first is this. What characterizes the public schoolboy is his highly developed and standardized attitudes towards authority, his fellows and himself—towards authority, a sense of identification or part proprietorship not at all inconsistent with criticism; towards his fellows a mixture of responsibility and conformity; towards himself, assurance and acceptance of the idea of personal duty, often with a meagre content. Perhaps this analysis is unduly flattering to the type. This is at all events immaterial to the argument, which is that the public school product is recognizable not by a common gift of 'leadership', not by a common bloom of culture, but by a common set of attitudes towards the business of individual and social living.

The second point to emphasize is that that type continually changes. As an entertaining contributor to the *Journal of Education* pointed out recently, the English 'gentleman' whom Maurois immortalized to the French in the person of Colonel Bramble was a type unknown to Nelson and Wellington and is already passing away. Education is strictly relative to the historical and social situation. Instead of debating how far the curious aura of the public school can be shared with those who cannot afford to buy it, critics would be better employed in considering how far this 'higher' education which the rich share with the clever, is becoming irrelevant to the situation—irrelevant as vocational training, irrelevant as cultural training and irrelevant in the human type which it produces.

In the age which is opening, the Government servants—and this class will increasingly absorb the professions—will certainly become more important than it is to-day; but it will have to develop a far closer understanding of the world in which it lives and a far more sensitive contact with the people who compose that world, if it is to approach with any hope of success the astonishing new tasks which await it—the task of exercising 'social controls' in a society in which even freedom can only be preserved in so far as society is so planned as to make it possible. 'Higher' education in England is disastrously out of touch with its world. The issue between public school and secondary school is negligible, compared with the need that both should move fast and far towards the creation both of a more relevant curriculum and a more relevant type. The former move can hardly begin until the Universities develop a new conception of the 'Humanities' as they exist to-day; but the latter is the especial province of the school which is in charge during the critical years between 14 and 18;

for it is in this intermediate age that the young, especially boys, are most ready to develop social—or antisocial—attitudes.

Thus there is revealed the full irony of the inequality between those who are educated to the end and those who are educated only to the beginning of adolescence. If these years between 14 and 18 were needed only to give time for the more highly powered intellects to explore the upper reaches of higher education, it might be justifiable to give the chance only to the brainy; but it is not so. Both theory and practice agree that what education can safeguard and encourage during these years is pre-eminently the growth of personality, temperament and character. Then why are the slow deemed to grow up more quickly than the quick? Why do they, even from the end of primary education at 11 plus, have cheaper teachers and poorer premises? Is it because we do not really believe our own theories? If education means what the authorities say it means, there is no conceivable reason why one child's education should vary *in length* from another's, however much it may vary in content; and even in content there is no reason for any wide variation in those activities and experiences which are particularly intended to develop character. For the mental and emotional attitudes which the individual needs for successful living do not differ any more widely than the experiences which he can expect. To make a success of single, married and family life, to remain solvent, to be loyal to one's mates without abrogating one's own judgment, to maintain a many sided relationship with authority without becoming a rebel or a slave—these are no different and no easier for a labourer than for a cabinet minister. They demand the same attitudes towards authority, the community and oneself. Under the guise of 'pure' education, the training available for the rich has produced a characteristic type, with its own virtues and deficiencies; but the national education has not yet evolved its own type, among many reasons the most obvious being that it loses the great majority of its children just when it should be beginning its most important work on them and raises the rest in an atmosphere governed by the material implications of the School Certificate.

In theory it is unnecessary to insist that higher education does not mean either double tracking the road to All Souls or producing more clerks than any community can possibly want. For that matter, it is unnecessary in theory to insist that the educational purpose should be maintained for as long in the life of one child as another, since the principle reached the



Statute Book in 1918. It is unnecessary in theory to insist that the purpose of education is at least what the purpose of elementary education was declared to be in the Introduction to the Code of 1904, namely 'to enable the children not merely to reach their full development as individuals but also to become upright and useful members of the community in which they live and worthy sons and daughters of the country to which they belong'. All this is recognized in theory; but in practice education has developed another function, namely to settle the income class and to some extent the social class in which the child is to compete; and parents are sufficiently realistic about this, even when educationists are not.

Unhappily, the problem at this point passes out of the educationist's province. He cannot prescribe which occupations shall carry social prestige, which shall offer at least the chance of riches, which shall offer a measure of security. These things are part of the social order, in which he cannot initiate major change; and while inequality inheres in that, it will be reflected in education.

He can, however, at least keep abreast of the changes which are taking place—and they are many. The 'law of supply and demand' is no longer regarded as providing an adequate automatic regulator for adjusting human activity to human need and there is no field in which its blind operation can be more disastrous than in allotting jobs to the young. To control the trade cycle is an economic task, but the whole field of vocational guidance and training is within the province of the educationist. It is growing fast and it will grow faster.

This demands a new attitude towards vocational training. Either the old distinction between pure and vocational training, which forty years ago was one of the many shams possible in that happy age of having-both-ways, must become a grim reality, or it must be abolished. If the world is to be a place in which the great majority are doomed to soul-destroying drudgery, then let vocational training teach them to do it efficiently and let 'pure' education assist them to bear their fate. If, on the other hand, the modern world is potentially a world of infinite possibility, socially, intellectually, spiritually as well as materially, then let education strike roots into the living reality of the present and find in the experience of what is new, relevance for its ancient verities.

The age of the Gentleman is over. The phrase has a shocking ring, only because of the English genius for making its institutions seem eternal by never changing their names.

The type which has changed so often even within the last hundred and fifty years must change again—more swiftly, more comprehensively than before. On its success in doing so, much may depend.

A successful human type is a type which has the attitudes needed in its own particular position in history and society. At one time and another the 'gentleman' has stood for a variety of successful types. To-day it stands for a type which is growing rapidly less successful. The fact that the type which supplants it may also be called 'the gentleman' will not make it less new.

The nearest that the British working classes have got to evolving their own type in recent years is 'the good trade unionist'—an expression covering a whole collection of social attitudes, affecting many aspects of life and capable of self-sacrifice to the verge of martyrdom. But 'the good trade unionist' also is getting out of date. The old battles have been won and the new ones make new demands.

It is devoutly to be hoped that in the searching days which lie ahead—in the war and for years after—a new English type may be produced; a type appropriate to a skilled and educated people, working and planning its way out of a tight corner. There will be no lack of challenges to stimulate appropriate responses; but education is a slow process. Gardeners cannot hurry. It is the more important that education should be thought of as training for the world which is coming, rather than for the world which is passing away.

## REMEMBERING MOUNTAINS

BY JOSEPH BRADDOCK

A COOL gust blew the cobweb clouds away,  
And Dawn flamingo-feathered touched the peaks.  
I drew quick breaths from the lung-piercing air,  
Viewing those ranges, in a reverie,  
Found in sky's still vague mirror—summits, clouds  
Floating, commingled, changing: now peach-coloured.  
Then the Sun showed his lion-face; morning broke,  
Poured from the fountain of all blue day-sky.  
Cold, clear, sharp-edged, (to *tank* of hidden cow-bells)  
I watched a rampart, framed through cool green larches,  
Pinnacled, blotched, the ultimate no-end—  
But daylight's gold ran free like liquid lava,  
And there aflame, afloat, the Beckoning Mountains,  
A mystery-challenge. I was never one  
To find a sharp dichotomy between  
Spirit and flesh; natural it ever seemed  
That matter was all one, that these same mountains,  
Their monumental spirits, transfixed movements,  
Wanted something. I would have plumbed their *wills*.  
It was most certain that they were alive.

From hairy vales of pine the great rocks rose,  
From greener, crested larch-slopes, from light seas  
Of waving pasture bending to the breeze  
As corn bends, where the voice of water flows

From culverts, silver-twisting rapid foam  
That sings incessant, as from every hill  
Furtive cicadas hide themselves and trill,  
To dart, retire at danger in the loam.

Their origin? What fevered Titan-urge  
Twisted them from the matrix of the earth?  
Did coral polyp bring their size to birth,  
Fantastic brood from out the salt sea surge?



Magnesian-lime, their bones, bred countless flowers,  
The shrubby dryas starred with frozen white;  
The flannel edelweiss that burns a light  
Grey taper through the starlit summer hours:

The shaded soldanella near the snow;  
The dark blue toadflax on the white moraine;  
Shy, dusky heads of clematis in rain;  
Woodlands where lady's-slipper orchids blow;

Meadows with many a glancing coloured bell,  
Where dun, soft-feeding Alpine cattle take  
Their ease. And hidden in the firs a lake  
Of malachite, deep as a witching well.

Here on the heights the small ice-crocus grows,  
Nor sun so fierce to scorch frail petals up  
While drift across the molten gentian cup  
Cool, fanning breezes from titanic snows.

The Sun spread broad upon a scene where trees  
Hung on the heights as galleons rigged with blossom;  
Higher, to meet the snow, went crocuses,  
Strewn, scattered like white pebbles. Home returned,  
How to remember this?—those pale swan-peaks  
Poised in arrested movement, floating wide,  
Quiet, with their carven wings against the blue,  
Lifting still loveliness into the sky?  
Or lush, flowered meadows, tumble of the bees,  
Vetch and genista, rarer chocolate smell  
Of nigritella? all the mingled fume  
Of summer's noon that brings a lover's mind.  
Speedwell was not more blue than showed the throat  
Of the male lizard. So I suppose I slept,  
And as I slept I heard a peasant sing.

"I'd naught but few dun cows to lead,  
And four Saint Bernard pups to feed.  
My cares were light as morning mist  
Before you came, before you kissed  
Me, mouth to mouth. Oh, now my brow  
Is cold as the perpetual snow;  
And watching if you'll come again  
Is like a prayer for summer rain,

While spot upon my wild cheek glows,  
Burns red as the first Alpine rose."

The girl's clear eyes so straight were wrought  
That I who loved saw bright again  
Mirrored in them a mountain lake  
And gentians washed as clean with rain;

And in the promise of her face  
The April of love-life to be;  
And in the stretch of her sweet limbs  
Grace proved, the very human *shé*.

Ah! love, love,  
We the forging links of passion knew,  
The live, wild world of loving,  
Instants precious to preserve.  
Guard the moods you can conserve,  
Lovers' memories, each warm feature  
Is our continent and true,  
Moments caught, and all Love's ranges  
Spread anew.

The chiffchaff's thread of sound  
Falling like water through the hot woods,  
Dark squirrel with his hairy, pointed ears  
Shy, near drey alert, scrambling, scolding that I invaded  
The needle-trees, his resinous solitudes,  
Woke me. And then the torrent's roar  
So loud, continual, I forgot to hear—  
My eyes upon a banded dragon-fly  
Low, planing clear.

Cold, cold, colder the air as evening grew;  
The dolomitic mountains, rock to skies,  
The long tarn shadowed, deep and cold  
Glittered with beauty's sudden beads, a rosary untold!  
The colour shrank, the crooked bastions towered  
Cold, clear, sharp-edged, (to *tank* of far off cow-bells).  
After brief alpglow, blood-red needle peaks,  
Pinnacled, burning with a million roses,  
Had faded, then I saw a star-touched entrance,  
Fantastic gateway between eerie ramparts,  
And a large star shone like a brilliant glowworm.

Orion dipped. I watched his great span fall  
Against the slowly turning mountain wall.  
I knew I stood upon a moving ball!

The silent mountains leant beneath the stars.

The Alpine snows to bullfinch-breast were turned,  
And Night came nigger-footed up the Pass.



## EDMUND BLUNDEN: AGONIST

BY RICHARD CHURCH.

**D**URING the last quarter of a century, the poetic generations have become swift and short. I remember hearing an elder poet—who in spite of his fame hates to be mentioned in print by his friends—say that to-day a generation of poets lasts for five years, and that on its heels another treads so close that it acquires a stiff neck from looking back in dread.

There is much truth in that humour. A poet does not arrive now: he only rests on a ledge, while those down below pot at him with the guns of derisive envy. See how Hardy, Housman, and the picturesque Rupert Brooke have been treated by our younger critics. They don't believe in 'live and let live'. Such a policy is too *laissez-faire* for them, smacking of the old liberalism which they so rabidly despise. Think, too, of their contempt for the group they call the *Georgians*, a classification which they use to include all poets between the ages of sixty-five and forty-five, irrespective of their work, and of the past vicissitudes which it encountered while these young savages were still in the nursery.

I say, irrespective of their work; and I think particularly of the poetry of Edmund Blunden. How curiously it has suffered. At the beginning, when in the early Twenties he sprang suddenly into notice with poems in Massingham's *Nation* and Squire's *London Mercury*, it was readily agreed amongst the monitors of that time that here was a new voice of real importance, one which would make old tradition blossom again like the rose. Following this recognition, the young poet wrote a war-book in somewhat self-conscious prose which carried him to a more general fame amongst the public not interested in poetry. After that, he retired into the monastery of Merton College, and has since been heard of only in the cruel head-notes of the young derisionists. They have sneered at his "nature" poetry, as they call it; and they have said more sinister things about re-actionary political tendencies in the

author of it. I have not heard a word of praise amongst them. I have not met a single disciple.

How very strange that is: for Blunden has never, in his literary career, said or done anything—as did the late Humbert Wolfe—to arouse antagonism. Wolfe, when at the height of his success, was realist enough to be frightened by it, and acted in public with a certain amount of affected flamboyance and audacity. He reached up and patted giants on the head—Hardy, for example. This so enraged a contemporary that he wrote a book of parodies which snuffed Wolfe out like a candle. It was unfair, for Wolfe was fundamentally a generous soul, both in life and literature, and his audacity was more fun than anything else.

But Blunden has never indulged in such indiscretions. I doubt if he even knows of the existence of work by his contemporaries. His literary interests stopped short with the death of Charles Lamb. After that, for him, it is darkness, except for the illumination of his own candle, past which he peers with beady eyes, like a startled mouse looking for the cat. But with this self-absorption, both in life and letters, one would think that Blunden could attract no enmities or envies. One would think that the younger poets would know where they were with him; they would know that he had never heard of them, nor wanted to, and was content to let them take the limelight, and the whole of the political platform—which was what they seemed mostly to want. In spite of this, however, they have savaged him. And in spite of them, he is still working as a poet, as we see from his new collection of poems covering the period 1930-1940. This collection carries on from the earlier one covering the period 1914-1930. In the two we have practically the whole of his output in verse, and from them we can make a general survey of its development.

First, let us take the work which appeared before the flood overwhelmed him; that flood which shook all his contemporaries. Not one escaped. Now that the flood is subsiding, after the war has knocked the bottom out of the School of College Communism, and set its leader flying to America, we see that not even Mr. Eliot has escaped the inundation. His famous dust-bin lies overturned in the silt. And in that position it appears to be past further use, especially at a time when the civilization which Mr. Eliot derided is throwing itself out of its own door on to its own rubbish-heap.

But these are temporary matters. "Civilizations break and bend"; but we are concerned at the moment with their

distillation, their permanent residue — poetry. After the hurricane, it comes like a calm rain, which fecundates the torn world once more. Blunden has been aware of the whole process, and refers to it thus:—

So this still rain beguiled my mood and verse,  
But I awake; I dreamed; what worth is his  
Who fashions thus a selfish universe,  
And weaves dead leaves with living tragedies?  
While the strong world goes forth in symphonies  
Of action, passion, science and resource,  
Where shall faint music and far similes  
Befriend it? has this stealing shower a force?  
And yet I fancy sometimes there is pain  
That still requires this shy and dream-like rain.

Old-fashioned, isn't it? And this is the later man speaking, in a poem from the 1930-40 volume. But let it penetrate; let it get past the mind, the mood, the present day preoccupation, and see if it waters the soul, that internal self which is deeper than our consciousness and our experience.

This quotation suggests that the poet is not unaware of the conditions, the problems, the literary conflicts and fashions, which have contributed to his seeming eclipse. That awareness was alive in him when he wrote the preface to his volume in 1930. "The titles and contents of my books *The Waggoner* and *The Shepherd* have, I apprehend, done me a slight injustice; that is, they have labelled me among poets of the time as a useful rustic, or perhaps not so useful—one of the class whom the song describes:—

I sits with my feet in a brook;  
If anyone asks me for why,  
I hits him a whack with my crook—  
'It's Sentiment kills me,' says I.

Great as is the power of country life over me, and of that stately march of the seasons above, around, below it, yet I have always suspected myself of some inclination to explore other subjects". Of one of those subjects, the malevolence of Time, I will speak in a moment, after I have discussed the technique which he so quickly perfected during his devotion to the poet John Clare. How can I best describe the peculiar effect of that technique? He does not break the poetic conventions with it, although in metre his experiments are varied enough. It is an instrument so precise to the requirements of his nature that I find I cannot discuss it without a simultaneous consideration of the element in his work which I proposed to discuss later. That element is Time. It is his adversary as it was Thomas Hardy's, and it has to be propitiated, and finally absorbed into



his acceptance of the scheme of things. This conflict with Time plays such an enormous part in his poetry because his experiences during the last war accentuated, to the point of madness, the possibilities of chance and change which can be brought about by the mere passage of moments. This tragic sense of the mutability of things pervades his work, and it stains his phrases and images so emphatically, that no adverse critic could accuse his verse of being colourless, or lacking in a personal thumb-mark. Here is something far more desperate than all the political and social injustices with which his detractors have filled their verse, and which they have said should be a poet's main interest. Their metropolitan fervours sound, to my ear, mechanical after the rush and roar of time's passage as Mr. Blunden hears it. Old Heraclitus, the philosopher who believed that the universe was made from the single element of Fire, would say that this rush and roar are the inevitable movement of combustion; the lovely shapes, situations, forms, loves and thoughts burning out from their complicated and separate beauty down into the ashes of unified oblivion and peace. That is a conception which haunts many minds. It underlies the variety of Blunden's interests, and gives a quality of anxiety to that quick, prying nervousness with which he ferrets out the joy of the world. It conditions all his acceptances of the appearance of things, and hedges them about with terror. He can trust nothing, not even the lovely manifestations of nature toward which he turns for healing of his war-wounded spirit. See, for instance, how he looks on at a party of skaters at midnight.

The hop-poles stand in cones,  
The icy pond lurks under,  
The hop-poles steeple to the thrones  
Of stars, sound gulfs of wonder;  
But not the tallest there, 'tis said,  
Could fathom to this pond's black bed.

Then is not death at watch  
Within those secret waters?  
What wants he but to catch  
Earth's heedless sons and daughters?  
With but a crystal parapet  
Between, he has his engines set.

Then on, blood shouts, on, on,  
Twirl, wheel and whip above him,  
Dance on this ball-floor thin and wan,  
Use him as though you love him;  
Court him, elude him, reel and pass,  
And let him hate you through the glass.

Here, surely, is no bucolic escapist. Here is a poet who finds in the countryside as bitter a waste-land as Mr. Eliot found in the back streets of the Town. Instead of the old sardine tins and the stray cats round the dustbins, he choses for symbols of the sardonic,

Thistles, most, jump from the marl,  
 Baring teeth in sudden snarl.  
 Perhaps when Magog was a child  
 They grew in gardens, lilies wild;  
 Injured here, they nurse their grievance;  
 Briars and nettles nod connivance.

Is it not the same conflict ; very much contemporary? With him, its effect is most extraordinary. While in mind and apprehension he seems always to be on thorns, always to be half-exhausted in an effort to touch everything that Nature manifests, yet for the expressing of his experiences during this quest he has evolved a poetry which is as calm and slow-moving as any in the language. Like Keats, his spirit is fevered with the greed for 'beauty and truth', and like Keats, his verse is loaded, architected, static. Again and again he gets deliberate effects by the use of double accents, or spondees.

The cuckoo with a strong flute,  
 The orchard with a mild sigh,  
 Bird and blossom so salute  
 The rainbow sky.  
 The brown herd in the green shade,  
 The parson in his lawn chair,  
 Poor and gentry both evade  
 The furnace air.  
 The moon-inveigled mushroom,  
 The crocus with her frail horn,  
 Gaze in dumb dread through the gloom  
 Of late moist morn.  
 The dead leaf on the highlands,  
 The old tramp on the mill drove,  
 Each whirls on nor understands  
 God's freezing love.

It is as though he is conscious of his fears, and by an effort of will tries to slow himself, to calm down his scared imagination to an accordance with the steady, loaded measures of his verse. But an artist's prevailing mood will always make itself felt in his technique, if only in a negative way. You will find in Blunden's rich lines a careful supply of old-fashioned words, many of them so archaic that Robert Bridges took the trouble to write a pamphlet about them. We find his early poems,

those written up to 1930, decorated with such words as 'whirry', 'clote', 'elmin', 'kerchered'. This practice reflects his effort to capture, before they have vanished, the myriad details of the setting where he lived his childhood before the war changed both him and the place where his ancestors dwelled and accumulated through century after century a tradition of local interest but universal significance.

Unrecorded, unrenowned,  
Men from whom my ways begin,  
Here I know you by your ground  
But I know you not within—  
There is silence, there survives  
Not a moment of your lives.

There is the time element again, ever eluding him. He ransacks that past, watching with agony the decaying of it as each familiar thing 'whirls on nor understands God's freezing love.' As we read, we begin to perceive that strain of madness in the work, kindled by frenzy. To this almost abnormal sensibility, the war came as a fiendish accentuation of the destructive process, making the poet cling with even greater conservative fears to the past. Is that what the young moderns object to in him? Are they embarrassed as he pries about closer and closer among "the tiny circumstances of peace" and mourns, with heart-breaking pathos, their mutilation and ruin? In his gesture of defiance he almost stands as the declared enemy of change, progress, experiment, or any other force that erases before it builds. And this is blasphemy to-day.

I should not give a true picture of Blunden's work, however, if I left it on a note of agony, especially when I consider the general mood of his volume covering the last ten years, in which he emphasises again and again that "there's a grace in monotony", and revels in the delights of a quietism shared with a companion whose influence has brought some effective antidote to the poison of time and the shattering experiences of the last war. Apart from this influence, a personal one which the critic cannot discuss, is the fact that Blunden has always valued so passionately the 'tiny circumstances' of the world, and found in them a joy so abundant that it overflows his heart and saturates every phrase which is making under his hands. He has a great gift of descriptive evocation, both of general and detailed scenes. He misses nothing. He picks out shy, odd things, the minutest happenings, the most shadowy of moods, and peers at them by the light of his robin-



lantern curiosity. And what he discovers there is always related by him to the huge stock of scenes and deeds and moods stored in his mind, a *cache* of book-treasures, the glories of other poets—except those of his own time—whose work is a part of our English scenery and atmosphere, and whose genius haunts our lanes and cottages, like swallows at nightfall.

In consequence, his ideas are always de-personalised by the time he has finished this subtle manipulation. He seems to hide his feeling behind his thought, and to deprecate, in almost an orgasm of shyness, the direct form of appeal to his reader. You approach him by the paths of scholarship, and unless you know the road, with its literary signposts, you never get near him or his meaning. But having approached, you discover a being of simple mood and impulse; a creature eloquent with faith and that rare quality, joy. Joy is the mainspring of his life and art. He is always searching for it among the memories of childhood, the only scene where he is assured of no disappointment.

Return; how stands that man enchanted  
Who, after seas and mountains crossed,  
Finds his old threshold, so long scanted,  
With not a rose or robin lost!

The wise, from passion now retreating  
To the hamlets of the mind,  
In every glance have claimed the greeting  
Of spirits infinitely kind.

Finally, we may remark how, in that quest and discovery of joy, his quick eye misses nothing. The smallest insect in the pond, the drabdest weed in the ditch, set him musing and creating a crowded solitude.

The magpies steering round from wood to wood,  
Tree-creeper flickering up the elm's green rind,  
Bold gnats that revel round my solitude  
And most this pleasant bee intent to find  
The newborn joy, inveigle the rich mind  
Long after darkness comes cold-lipped to one  
Still listening to the bee, still basking in the sun.

To remove oneself from the particularities of his patient vision and to look at his work as a whole is like standing at some familiar point on the North Downs, taking that wide southward view over the Weald on an eternal summer afternoon, when

Golden-age-beckonings, lost pastoral things,  
Fantastically near and far away,  
Stretch in the sunny calm their blazoned wings

The nearer slopes, hedges, fields; the clumps of woodland, the oasts and spires, the middle-scene uplands, and the distant line of whale-backs near the coast, these are all both new and ancient to our eyes, half-torturing us with a fullness of suggestion. We have explored it all; but seen aloof it seems an unapproachable land of longing. So it is with this poetry by a Wealden man; a stretch of country of the mind, in which one feels native, yet is ever confronted with surprises that startle moments into ecstasy outside the course of time.

## THE LEASED BASES

BY ADMIRAL SIR HERBERT RICHMOND

**B**Y the agreement of September 2 (Cmd 6224) Great Britain received fifty destroyers from the United States, and the United States from Britain a ninety-nine years lease of certain harbours for use as naval and air bases. Of these, two, one in Newfoundland and one in Bermuda, are granted "freely and without consideration": the leases of the others, to wit in the Bahamas, on the south coast of Jamaica, in St. Lucia, Trinidad, Antigua and British Guiana, are exchanged for "naval and military equipment and material" in the concrete shape of the fifty United States destroyers of the 1200 ton type: vessels whose age provided they have been well looked after does not by any means signify that they are not useful fighting craft. They are a shade smaller than many of the more recent vessels of this type, but a smaller vessel has many advantages in the work that now forms so large a part of the services of the Navy in this war—action against submarines and aircraft.

It is unnecessary to stress the value of this naval reinforcement. The country, single-handed, is at war with two naval Powers, for though Germany has few battleships and cruisers she is the possessor of numerous submarines and aircraft, the two types that have caused us the heaviest losses at sea; and Italy has also a respectable destroyer flotilla in addition to her larger units. In the strenuous work of the last year, conducted in narrow waters infested with these submarine and aerial craft and sown with mines, the British flotilla, too few as it had been allowed to become in the preceding years, has suffered several losses which new construction has not yet had time to replace: moreover, it is to be expected that Germany has also been building as she did to good effect in the last war. There is neither need for nor sense in debating the balance of advantage in the transaction. It is one that benefits both parties, for as Britain desired this reinforcement in her life and death struggle, the United States, now well alive to the dangers to



which the Western Hemisphere is threatened by the aggressive policy of the Axis Powers, feels the need to strengthen her own defences against them.

Mahan was fond of repeating a particular aphorism of Napoleon's; "War is a business of positions". It recurs frequently in his writings, particularly in those chapters in his *Naval Strategy* devoted to the study of the problem of the defence of the Caribbean. There he emphasized the part which the possession of bases was bound to play and the need for others besides those in the hands of the United States at the time he was writing.

We have only to look at our own naval history to confirm the Napoleonic saying. It was to keep the strong powers of Spain and later, France from the positions in the Netherlands that this country opposed their conquests by those military and naval Powers. When Cromwell found the need to make England a power in European affairs he found he must do so in the Mediterranean. For a while he could, at the favour of the Duke of Tuscany, make use of Leghorn, but he needed something more permanent, and designed the capture of other positions. Charles II obtained Tangier, but through folly and factiousness it was thrown away. When William III was in alliance with Spain his fleet had the use of the Spanish ports as bases, but when Spain was in the opposing camp the fleet was without a base and the first necessity of the war was the capture of one—Cadiz. The treaty with Portugal did more than provide this country with an excellent wine; it gave her a base, Lisbon; and later fortune rather than planned management placed Gibraltar in the British hands. But Gibraltar did not suffice; it was too far from the scene of action in the Gulf of Lions, and Minorca was taken. It was through the possession of these bases within the Straits that England was able to maintain a fleet permanently in that sea instead of making brief visits during the summer months.

And so the story goes on in the later years. The fleet must have a position in the area in which it is to operate, and the nearer the base is to the place where the action of the ships lies the more permanently can occupation be maintained and the more economical its effort. Those two points are of peculiar application to the American position, and our experience enables us to appreciate the American desires. Distance between the base and the area of operations is as important in these days of aircraft and small surface craft as it was for the

fleets of sailing ships of the old wars. A base close at hand means that fewer craft are needed to keep a constant watch in any locality, that a more intense observation can be maintained, that supporting forces can act with greater certainty and strength.

The bases now leased to the United States affect primarily two areas: the approaches to the principal ports standing on the Eastern seaboard from Boston to Charleston and the highly important coastal trade; and the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, which, (to use words of Mahan) "form a kind of inland sea or Mediterranean". The bases in Newfoundland and Bermuda relate to the first of these areas, those in the Antilles and Guiana to the second.

To take the first of these. The trade of the Eastern seaboard is the highest importance to the United States. Under modern conditions, and probably still more under those which may be foreseen with the inevitable development of aircraft and submarines, the possibilities of attack upon trade increase. Experience has made it clear that against both these craft convoy affords the best, if not indeed the only protection, and that the vessels best adapted to this form of defence against them are the small craft of the flotilla type and aircraft. The trade route from Northern Europe passes to the southward of Newfoundland, at distances varying in different seasons according to the position of the ice-fields. The approaches to the Newfoundland Banks are thus the natural position in which an attacker would wish to operate. The distance from the Banks to the nearest possible base in Maine is not far from 800 miles; and, as our long experience shows, the "danger zone" stretches a good distance—possibly 300 or even 400 miles—out to seaward. It is thus probable that escorting forces would be needed at least as far into the sea as this, which would involve a trip of some 1,100 miles out from and the same distance back to an American port. The economy of effort in operating from a base in Newfoundland is plain; and at the same time there is the power of making aircraft sweeps over the route the value of which has been experienced by ourselves in the Western approaches. The wear and tear upon both men and machinery is lessened by shorter voyages, so that both efficiency and economy are promoted by the possession of this advanced base.

Bermuda, lying some 600 miles from the American coast, at the apex of a triangle of which the stretch of coast between

Boston and Charleston is the base, is well placed as an outpost for the forces defending the coastal trade, and for meeting, or giving warning of, attack on a more considerable scale against the territory itself. No attacker could lose sight of the risks he would run, whether in attempting an attack in force, or a sporadic attack, when exposed to the possibility of having his movements reported and his activities threatened by naval and air forces at Bermuda. Lying as the island does some 600 miles from both Boston and the Bahamas, scouting forces in those three positions would each need to cover no greater distance than 300 miles in order to maintain a watch upon the two stretches of water to the northward and south-westward; and so the Bahama position is an integral element in the security of the northern area.

The great interest which America has in the Caribbean is obvious. It lies in the Panama Canal, whose importance is twofold, commercial and military. An ever increasing flow of trade passes through that waterway which serves also to enable the Atlantic and Pacific fleets to move quickly from one sea to the other; and, what is of very great importance, to pass supplies to the fleet in the Pacific, the materials of which come mainly from the Eastern States. Even, however, before the construction of the Canal, Mahan was pointing out the need for bases. "It is evident," he then wrote, "that the United States Navy owing to the weakness of her base upon the Gulf (i.e. Key West) and to the fact that she has no solid possessions in the Caribbean Sea, is not only at a great disadvantage . . . but is exposed to serious direct injury in the mere maintenance of her existing home interests, dependent as they are upon free access to the ocean and the Caribbean through the Straits of Florida and the Yucatan Passage." After the cutting of the Canal the new situation arose. "One thing is sure: in the Caribbean Sea is the strategic key to the two great oceans, the Atlantic and Pacific, our own chief maritime frontiers."

The bases which until now she has possessed in the Caribbean are at Guantanamos Bay in Cuba, Porto Rico, Key West in Florida and the island of St. Thomas. Vessels and craft operating from these positions can effectively control the comparatively narrow channels between them—not wider than some 50 to 100 miles—which lead into the Caribbean and are the northern approaches to the Canal zone: the Florida Strait, Windward Passage, Mona Passage and a stretch of



water for a certain distance to the eastward of St. Thomas. By the acquisition of bases at Antigua, St. Lucia and Trinidad a chain of stations for her squadrons, flotillas and air forces is at her disposal, none of them more than about 100 miles apart; hence patrolling vessels have only to observe short distances—some 50 miles or so—from their bases. In the normally clear weather of those seas this is an easy task, and the whole of the approach to the Canal is now encircled by positions from which a constant observation can be maintained and action be taken at short notice. No enemy surface vessel could come inside this circle without qualms of being cut off, and even submarines might be uneasy: and certainly no large military expedition could hope to approach the Canal zone without its presence being known long before the clouds of wetness at Colon were in sight.

The base in Guiana “within 50 miles of Georgetown” serves as an outpost to Trinidad but still more as a means of affording protection to the South American trade. It furnishes an advanced position for cruiser forces if it should be necessary to station them in the offing of Pernambuco—the area in which the *Karlsruhe* did most of her damage in the last war.

Jamaica furnishes a most useful position within the Caribbean. Although Guantánamos Bay is well placed, it is useful in these days of small craft and air forces to have another base nearer to the Canal; it is 150 miles closer, and so shortens the distance to 500 miles, a space not difficult to patrol from the two end positions. Mahan called Jamaica “the key of the Caribbean” and though he was considering conditions different from those we now see, the increase in the security obtained by the use of Jamaica is considerable; nor is it confined to the interests here referred to.

The three thousand miles of undefended frontier between the United States and Canada, the lakes on which no fighting vessels are kept by either State, is an earnest of the confidence in each other's good faith and intentions. The handing over of a duplicate of the key of the Caribbean is another. The whole transaction is a manifest proof of the reality of the desire expressed in the British memorandum “to strengthen the ability of the United States to co-operate effectively with the other nations in the Americas in defence of the Western Hemisphere.”

## THE NEW ORDER IN EAST ASIA.

BY GERALD SAMSON

WE are living in days when it is the fashion for politicians, political theorists, and plain political gangsters, to talk of a New Order which is to be created.

So far the democracies have been rather diffident about trying their hand at New Order construction; but the autarchic Powers are making a great parade of their efforts in this direction. The latest demonstration is that of Japan, which boldly and sonorously announces "The New Order in Greater East Asia".

There are many reasons why the Japanese product requires both careful examination and careful watching. The chief reason is that the "East Asian Order" is confessedly not an end in itself, but only an essential step towards world domination. It enshrines the political aspirations of the Shinto faith, and has a long tradition behind it. In fact the element of novelty is only present in the circumstances which have provided a fresh opportunity for its exposition and practical application.

The antiquity is not disguised: it is only unrecognized in the West because of unfamiliarity with its terms and phraseology which are historic. For instance, in a recent statement to the Press, Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka, notorious for having walked out of the League Assembly in 1933 over the Lytton Report on the Manchurian incident, explained that Japan's mission was "to proclaim and demonstrate Kodo (the Imperial Way) throughout the world". What did he mean?

This doctrine is an integral part of what is known as *Dai Nippon Sekai Kyo* "Great Japan World Teaching", which was expounded in an article in the *Nichi-Nichi Shimbun* as far back as December, 1920.

The people and gods who are centralized in the doctrine of Kodo-Omoto are only working to accomplish this greatest and loftiest task of unifying

the world under the sway of the Emperor of Japan. . . . We are only aiming at making the Emperor of Japan rule and govern the whole world, as he is the only ruler in the world who retains the spiritual mission inherited in the Divine World.

Only!

About the same date Dr. Uesugi Shinkichi was writing:

It is now most clear that the salvation of the entire human race is the mission of our empire. Nations are now in a condition of disorder. There are classes within the nations, each class struggling for its own interests and each thinking the other an irreconcilable enemy. . . . When we observe such conditions, there is not one of our people who does not believe that, if they only had the Emperor as theirs, they would not come to such extremity. . . . Our people, through the benevolent virtue of the Emperors, have attained a national constitution that is without parallel in the world. . . . Now, if all the human race should come to look up to the virtue of our Emperor and should come to live under that influence, then there would be light for the future of humanity. Thus the world can be saved from destruction. Thus life can be lived within the realms of goodness and beauty. Of a truth, great is the mission of our nation.\*

This, then, is the fixed idea underlying Japanese foreign policy, a belief in a "civilizing mission" not for East Asia only, or even for the Pacific area, but for the whole world. We have heard before of such civilizing missions, and usually they have been the prelude to and excuse for the most barbarous acts of aggression.

With Japan, as we shall show, the policy is a very old one; but it needs to be emphasized that in its ancient form it is being strictly adhered to to-day. The new Japanese Government is therefore entirely consistent in its pronouncement (on August 1) that:

The basic aim of Japan's national policy lies in the establishment of world peace, in accordance with the lofty spirit of 'Hakkoichiu' (eight corners of the world under one roof, i.e., the Imperial roof) wherein the country was founded, and in the construction, as a first step, of the New Order in Greater East Asia, having for its foundation the solidarity of Japan, Manchukuo and China. Japan will therefore devote the total strength of the nation to the fulfilment of the above policy by setting up swiftly an unshakeable national structure of her own—to meet the requirements of new developments both at home and abroad.

From the dawn of Japanese history numerous attempts were made to subjugate Korea on the Asiatic mainland; but these efforts did not become part of a settled policy of domination until the conquests of Hideyoshi—the Japanese Napoleon—in the sixteenth century. It is from his time that the policy really dates.

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\**Kokutai Seikwa no Hatsuyo*, pp. 205-6.



In the previous centuries Japan had been only very slowly gaining political coherence and cultural independence. There is a marked and rather curious parallel between the progress of the Japanese Isles and the British Isles during relatively the same period. For a long time Japan was as culturally dependent on China as England was on France, and this period appears in the records as "The Period of Imitation." Military excursions to the mainland and the piratical raiding of the coasts also offer an interesting similarity to the English expeditions and the deeds of her sea-dogs.

Even stranger is the fact that an impetus to Japanese national solidarity was given by the providential defeat of an invading armada. In the story of Japan Kublai Khan plays the part that in England's story was filled by Philip of Spain. Kublai, the Mongol Emperor of China, insisted that Japan recognize him as superior and send an envoy to show becoming reverence to his throne. When this was refused, Kublai fitted out and despatched in the winter of 1274 a fleet of 900 war vessels with 25,000 men on board to deal a mortal blow at this puny enemy. The great armada sailed, and an army was landed on Kyushu; but one morning it had completely vanished. In the night a mighty tempest had arisen and scattered and broken the fleet. The terror-stricken remnant fled hastily back to Korea. A second armada sent seven years later suffered a like fate, the discomfiture of the invaders being completed by a sulphurous vapour which rose out of the sea, no doubt of volcanic origin. From these events emerged the new Japan, imbued with a firm belief in her inviolability and exalted destiny. England struck an armada medal bearing the inscription "He blew with His wind, and they were scattered". Japan also speaks of Shinpu (The Wind of God), of Tenyu (The Grace of Heaven), and of Shinkoku (The Divine Nation), and these have become her sacred watchwords.

Gone was the fear of China's might, to be succeeded by defiance and contempt. An imperial programme began to take shape. The Japanese sea-rovers became the nucleus of the Japanese navy. Industrialism led to a rapid increase in foreign trade.

Then, in the sixteenth century, came Hideyoshi with his grandiose scheme for a great Asiatic dominion that should extend the sway of Japan over China, Korea, India, Persia, and other lands, as well as the islands of the South Seas. The Japanese Emperor was to be enthroned in Peking as the ruler

of this vast territory. Much of this programme would undoubtedly have been accomplished but for the untimely death of its inspirer. As it was, China, Korea, and Japan itself, were exhausted by the protracted wars, and though Hideyoshi left as a heritage a burning faith in Japan's divine mission the flames of militarism died down and the land had rest for three hundred years. The interval of time was important, however, for it was long enough to invest the fundamental principles of Japanese foreign policy with all the attributes of a religion, so that when active contact with the outside world was resumed in the nineteenth century the policy was reinforced by credal conviction.

Japan became alive to the scramble for empire which was governing the activities of the Western Powers, most of whom were staking claims wherever territories occupied by backward or militarily ill-equipped peoples were available. The victory was to the strong, and Japan determined to be strong. With her "divine mission" as an incentive, she set about the modernizing of her armament so as to be in the running in the race for imperial prizes. If the promise of old was to be fulfilled—which was not doubted—now was the moment to fulfil it.

Results appeared fully to warrant further expectations. Two great successes on the Asiatic continent, one over China in 1895, and another over Russia ten years later, convinced young Japan that it was her destiny to finish the uncompleted work of Hideyoshi. Korea was annexed in 1910, but resistance to further Japanese expansion in the direction of China and Manchuria was now manifested by states which in Hideyoshi's day had not intruded on the oriental scene. Britain, France, Germany and the United States, as well as Russia, had acquired important interests which they were fully prepared to safeguard. These interests blocked the "Imperial Way," and there seemed to be no immediate prospect of eliminating them.

Then came the Great War of 1914; and in the destructive conflict between the Western Powers Japan saw her opportunity. She lost no time in presenting to a helpless China her bullying "Twenty-One Demands". These plainly revealed Japan's continental ambitions, which, in effect, were to bring China and its untold resources under her direct "sphere of influence".

Although these Demands had to be modified considerably before they were accepted, none the less Japan could register valuable gains in concessions in Shantung and Manchuria,

partly at the expense of the former German possessions. The Treaty of Versailles confirmed the Japanese position in Shantung, gave Japan a mandate over the one-time German South Sea Islands lying north of the Equator, and by admitting her to a permanent seat on the Council of the League of Nations, brought about her recognition as a first-class Power.

In 1922, however, under the terms of the Washington Treaties, Japan agreed to return to China her acquired rights in Shantung, and together with Great Britain and the United States and other interested Powers solemnly undertook to respect Chinese sovereignty. She also agreed at that time to accept an inferior ratio in naval tonnage, of three to five, as between her fleet and those of Britain and the United States, receiving in return a guarantee that neither Hongkong nor the Philippines would be developed as powerful naval bases. The implications of these undertakings were naturally very unpopular with a large section of Japanese opinion, as was also the termination out of Britain's friendship with America of the twenty year old Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

Liberal influences and internal economic problems succeeded nevertheless in restraining the aggressive elements in the state for nearly a decade. But it was an all too brief interval to establish a conciliatory policy, and the militant forces were soon in the saddle again. The seizure of Manchuria by the Japanese Army in 1931, and the setting up of the puppet state of "Manchukuo" marked the beginning of a determined attempt to establish in all its aspects the Japanese hegemony so long held to be the ultimate glorious destiny of the nation. There was to be no more halting in the onward march towards that goal.

Those in the West, who have watched with grave and increasing concern the successive phases of Japan's activities, show little knowledge of the real issues involved if they believe that Japan can now be treated as a normal Power willing for accommodation and compromise in the interests of a wider harmony in international relationships. Any compromises that she may offer or accept are interim only, and it would be gross self-deception to imagine that they would reflect any change of heart or any fundamental divergence from the road to world domination: they would merely be tactical moves. Nothing short of overwhelming military disaster and the debunking of the God-Emperor myth will restore Japan to sanity.



## THE NEW ORDER IN EAST ASIA

Every step, therefore, that Japan has taken since 1931 must be viewed in the light of her prevailing and unrelenting purpose. It was in 1934 that there was first publicly announced through the Japanese official spokesman what amounted to a Monroe Doctrine for East Asia. Later, for reasons of policy, there was an endeavour to explain away this blunt statement of intention, but it was evident that the spokesman had correctly interpreted the objective of the Government. In the same year Japan denounced the Washington and London Naval Treaties, thereby definitely repudiating naval inferiority as compared with America and Britain. Unrestricted fleet construction was essential if Japan was to assert her supremacy in the Pacific.

The subsequent attempt to detach China's five northern provinces from their allegiance to the Chinese National Government, the invasion of China proper in 1937 leading to the Sino-Japanese war which has now dragged on for more than three years, the setting up of a Central Chinese puppet administration at Nanking, has all been part of the plan to bring independent East Asiatic countries under Japanese influence.

The new European war has been regarded by Japan as a providential dispensation in her favour, permitting her to increase her pressure on the Western Democracies with Far-Eastern interests, to offer gross insults to Britain, and to make peremptory demands on French Indo-China. A bond of communion has been discovered with the Axis Powers, though if Hitler and Mussolini realized that Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy were one day expected humbly to submit to Japanese dictation as the final lords of the world they might not be so ready to bolster up Nippon's present claims.

Recent months have seen an intensification, and to some extent a clarification, of Japanese policy. The emphasis just now is concentrated on the "New Order in Greater East Asia"; but again there must be a warning that the accomplishment of this—if it is to be accomplished—is only a stage in the progress towards a Japanese World Order. No one should therefore be deceived by the bland and apparently reasonable declarations such as have been made by ex-Foreign Minister Hachiro Arita in his broadcast speech of June 29, or by subsequent statements of the new Japanese Government already quoted.

Mr. Arita said:

Japan's ideal since the foundation of the Empire has been that all nations should be enabled to find their proper places in the world. . . . In order to realize such an ideal, therefore, it seems to be most natural that peoples who are closely related with each other geographically, racially, culturally, and economically should first form a sphere of their own for co-existence and co-prosperity, and establish peace and order within that sphere and at the same time secure relationship of common existence and prosperity with other spheres. . . . The countries of East Asia and the regions of the South Seas are geographically, historically, racially and economically very closely related to each other. . . . The uniting of all these regions in a single sphere on the basis of their common existence, thereby insuring the stability of that sphere is, I think, a natural conclusion. . . . Quite naturally Japan expects that Western Powers will do nothing that will exert any undue influence upon the stability of East Asia. Japan, while she is carrying on vigorously her task of reconstructing the New Order in East Asia, is paying serious attention to developments in the European war and to its repercussions in various quarters of East Asia, including the South Sea region. I desire to declare that the destiny of these regions—any developments therein and any disposal thereof—is a matter of grave concern to Japan in view of her mission and responsibility as the stabilizing force in East Asia.

Upon this speech *The Times* of July 1 commented:

If it means the wide regions in the Pacific as well as in the Far East are to be regarded as a Japanese sphere of influence where other Powers, if tolerated at all, are to 'keep their proper stations', then the claim will not easily be accepted by nations which have definite rights and obligations in those parts of the world. If, on the other hand, it means that Japan expects to be consulted in any ultimate territorial or political changes in the Pacific, the demand would be natural enough at a time when the foundations and frontiers of a great part of the civilized world have been shaken or swept away by lawless violence.

As we have seen, the alternative interpretation is miles away from the mark, and even the first shows only a partial comprehension of the sinister significance of the statement. The areas embraced by the words Pacific and South Seas are not specified; but do they need to be specified when Japan's admitted programme is so all-embracing?

In view of Japan's actual aims it will be appreciated how necessarily futile have been Britain's attempts at appeasement in recent months. No sooner was the ink dry on the settlement of the Tientsin dispute than Japan demanded the closure of the Burma Road to Chinese military supplies. That being granted for a provisional period on the tacit understanding that it would relieve the tension, the Japanese Government then resigned and the new Government could regard itself as not bound by the verbal assurances of its predecessor. Moreover, the new Premier, Prince Konoye, appointed as his Foreign Minister Mr. Matsuoka, a man well-known for his

Fascist leanings and his desire to strengthen the relations between Japan and the Axis. His acceptance of the full implications of Japanese foreign policy we have already noted. Simultaneously there took place the arrest of a number of prominent Britons on charges of espionage and subversive activities followed by anti-British demonstrations in Japan and Japanese-occupied territory in China.

How, then, should be considered Japan's gesture to Australia, seeking co-operation "in a cultural mission for the promotion of international goodwill and the betterment of the human race"? Surely this too is of a piece with the other manifestations of Japan's determination to extend her influence by every means over the whole of the vast area included in the Far East and the South Seas. The "gesture" has so far been welcomed that there has been a reciprocal appointment of ministers, Sir John Latham, Chief Justice of Australia, becoming her first Minister to Japan. The portent, so far as the British Empire is concerned, is decidedly unfavourable, and only the future will show what is eventually involved in this tiger-riding experiment.

Now, Indo-China, consequent upon the precarious position of the French Empire, is experiencing the effects of Japan's unremitting pressure towards the goal of her insatiable ambitions.

The challenge of the New Order in Europe is occupying most of our attention at the present time. But this challenge is really less to be feared because the issue has already been joined: we know the worst, and our dispositions have been made to meet and overcome it. The danger has reached its zenith and may soon be on the wane. A valuable part of the means of our salvation is provided by the support of the United States, which also recognizes our peril as hers. The challenge of the New Order in East Asia, if we could fully apprehend it, is much graver because as yet it is more intangible: it is Japan rather than Germany which has the "secret weapons". But we cannot wait much longer before we decide whether this challenge also is to be resisted to the utmost of our power, and here again—and perhaps to a higher degree—the peril is common to the British Empire and the United States, and only joint action or closely co-ordinated action will avert it.



## THE STRUGGLE: THREE PHASES

BY MARY LESLIE

*(Miss Leslie is 73. She tells here of her life as a factory worker, a free-lance journalist and as an old age pensioner. It is a social and economic document of great value and the spirit in which it is written reveals an unconscious nobility which nevertheless lays bare the hardness of the struggle.)*

UP to nearly twelve years of age, my parents and I lived in Kent. At that time my father, through ill-health and other misfortunes fell out of work, and that fact necessitated our migration to the West Riding of Yorkshire, in 1878. My father got work in a brick-kiln, at £1 per week as wages, his duty being to burn bricks on every night during the week except Sundays. My mother took charge of a neighbour's child, for which she was paid 4s. 6d. per week, while the child's own mother worked every day in a factory as a weaver, and I was sent to work as a "half-timer" at the nearest worsted factory.

Sixty years ago the age of "half-timers" employed in towns and villages throughout the West Riding, had been raised to ten. Before that, in the "good old days," little children of six and seven were employed regularly as "half-timers," at wages ranging from 1s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. per week. "Half-time" in the factory simply meant that children worked one week in the morning turn, beginning at 6.30 a.m., and the next week in the afternoon, attending school alternately in the same way.

Being nearly twelve when we left Kent, I only had one year to work as a "half-timer." I began in the spinning-room, where children usually began their routine of factory life in those days, and I was soon earning 3s. 6d. per week as wages. At that period our combined income was thus £1 8s. 0d., and the rent of a cottage on the outskirts of a big manufacturing town was 2s. 6d. weekly.

After working three months at the brick-kiln, my father fell ill of rheumatic fever, and was never able to work again. My work as a "half-timer" in the factory consisted of keeping the spinning frames supplied with "rovings," which were spun on

to bobbins as weft ready for the weavers. It was not hard work, nor particularly dirty. The work itself I never disliked, but I shall never forget the sensation caused by the painful contrast which factory life presented to my former life.

The surroundings were all dirty, and sordid, vulgar, and revolting. Men and boys habitually used language to which I had never been accustomed. The other girl spinners were anything but refined, and for a time I heartily hated the factory and everything in it. Those were, indeed very dark days. I was not old enough to look beneath the surface, to understand the genuine good feeling and sympathy hidden under the brusque manner and rough dialect speech, and so for a time the sun refused to shine and everything looked dark and forbidding.

At thirteen I went "full-time" in the factory, while in the sixth "standard" at school, and I soon learned to become a "piecer" in the spinning-room, and to be responsible for two "sides" of a spinning frame, for which I received a weekly wage of 10s. My year of probation as a "half-timer" had reconciled me somewhat to factory life and work, and I believe that I was always philosophically inclined, not given to crying over spilt milk, but determined to make the best of things. At anyrate, when I was sixteen, I found myself promoted to weighing and testing yarns, and my wages were raised to 13s. This new work gave me opportunities of seeing the different operations of converting wool into cloth, and the knowledge thus acquired has since proved very useful.

Afterwards I passed on to paying wages, taking stock of weft and warp, checking wage-books as they came in from the various departments, for which duties my wages were raised to 16s. weekly. Thus acting as a sort of general clerk I found life in the factory far pleasanter than at one time I ever imagined it could be. Now I had a small office to myself, and I had no whirr of machinery or smell of oil and tallow to annoy me, and when I felt inclined, I could spare a few minutes during the day either to read, or write down my thoughts.

When I was twenty my father, who had been bed-ridden for two years, died, and mother and I were left to keep house together. For three years there was nothing coming in but my 16s. and my mother's 4s. 6d. Naturally, we were driven to applying for parish relief, not a very pleasant experience, but there it was. Life was a hard struggle in those far-off days. There was no National Insurance, no Widow's Pension,

no Old Age Pension. One thing, living was comparatively cheap. I advised my mother to join the Co-operative Stores, and their half-yearly dividends came in very useful. The doctor, who was a kind-hearted, generous Scotsman, never pressed for the money we owed him for the many visits he paid to my father, and the medicine he needed, which the doctor provided.

Every week we put by 2s. 6d. for the rent, and paid it monthly. Our scale of living was by no means elaborate. Fresh meat once a week, and fish every other day, herrings mostly either fresh or kippered. Best Irish rolled bacon was only 8d. per lb. in those days, and 1lb. lasted the two of us a full week. Butter, I think, was about 1s. per lb., and  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. was enough for us. Porridge came in handy for breakfast and supper in the winter. Eggs were 16 for a shilling, home produce, and often one egg each served for dinner, with a slice of bread and a bit of cheese to follow. I have forgotten the price of milk, but we used  $\frac{1}{2}$ -pint per day. My mother was a very good cook, and she could make exceedingly nice sago or rice puddings. No granulated sugar for working people sixty years ago, but brown moist was about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or 3d. a lb.

There was water laid on in the cottage, but no gas, and oil for lamps was an item in winter time. Coal we got in by the ton, and paid for it so much weekly, one shilling if I remember rightly. Needless to say, with the strictest economy, there was not much left out of the £1 which came into the home every week. I could never afford to keep regular spending money, and was obliged to wait for "Co-op." dividends to get myself boots, stockings, and clothes generally. Soon after my father's death, my mother's health began to fail, and for the rest of her life she was a semi-invalid. There were no "pictures" to spend money on, and the nearest approach to amusements for me was a Sunday School concert now and then, and one extra treat every year when I contrived to visit the nearest town to hear one of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas.

As far as clothes were concerned I kept in the fashion as much as I could afford to do so. My means being so strictly limited I could only get a new costume every other year, and that usually cost about £2 2s. 0d., including the making. Girls who worked at the factory where I was employed for so many years, had one great privilege allowed them. They could always buy good cloth and blouse materials out of the factory at cost price. Of course that meant the saving of a few



shillings on every blouse and costume. Unlike the majority of factory workers, I was not clever with my needle. Many girls made their own blouses, trimmed their own hats, and sometimes even made their own costumes. That was one of the reasons why the factory lasses of the West Riding managed to look so smart in the evenings and on Sundays. Naturally, they could afford to spend more money on clothes when they had nothing to pay for the making.

As far as I can remember, I used to spend about £5 yearly on clothes during my factory life, that is, taking one year with another. The bill worked out something as follows:—One costume, £2/2/0; one pair of kid gloves, 2s. 6d.; one pair of woollen gloves, 1s. 6d.; two pairs of strong boots, £1/1/0; one pair of best boots, 12s. 6d.; two pairs of stockings for summer wear, 3s. 4d.; one best blouse, 5s. 6d.; two working blouses, 4s.; one summer hat, about 5s.; one winter hat, 3s.; which brough the total to about £5. Occasionally I would need a fresh supply of underclothes, both for summer and winter. This generally meant that I had to go short of some outside adornment, at least for the time being.

At any rate, it was good training in thrift and economy, and I have often been thankful for it since. Often I grumbled, and sometimes I kicked at my limitations, wondering why I could not do as other girls did. But as I grew older I gradually realized that it was not always the smartest dressed girls who earned the best wages and kept out of debt, and eventually I grew resigned to my lot. In this respect I do not wish to pose as a superior person. Far from it. Dress was never a temptation to me, even in my young and perhaps foolish days, nor was theatre going or dancing.

During my working life in the factory—which covered twenty years—I did not receive the sort of training which one would expect to get at a select seminary for young ladies. Nevertheless, I learned some valuable lessons there, among them to

Gently scan my brother man,  
Still gentler sister woman,

and also the truth of George Eliot's words:—"It will never rain roses; if we want more roses we must plant more trees."

## II

I always look on the Girls' Friendly Society as being the means of rousing into life any literary talent I may happen to

possess. As a girl of sixteen or seventeen I had become a member of the G.F.S., and one year prizes were offered for the best essay on a certain subject. I competed, along with teachers in elementary schools and girls still attending school, and to my unbounded surprise I succeeded in winning the second prize. Was ever anyone so proud of half a sovereign? At any rate the incident fired my slumbering ambition. If I could win ten shillings for an essay, why could I not write for papers and earn money in that way?

Well, my first journalistic venture was to describe a local football match from a girl's point of view. I sent it to a well-known north country newspaper; it was accepted and I received the sum of five shillings. Then I began to write articles on factory life and work, detailing my own experiences. I remember one laughable incident. I had written an article for a monthly magazine on *The Inside of Factory Life and Work*. One reviewer gave it as his opinion that the article was well written by someone outside the factory. As time went on I naturally got more ambitious, and began to try some of the London dailies and weeklies. To my great surprise I was again successful in my efforts.

After going "full-time" into the factory, I attended evening classes held in a Mechanics' Institute. In those days there were neither trams nor buses running from outlying districts into the town, so I had to walk there and back after a day's work in the factory. Also I tried to form a little private library of my very own. *Nuttall's Dictionary* I bought instead of a new hat. When I succeeded in becoming the owner of *Green's Short History*, it meant doing without new boots one summer. *Brewer's History of Phrase and Fable*, second-hand, of course, saw me minus a necessary pair of gloves. In this way I discovered the secret that one never really values a purchase until one has practised a little self-denial to get it.

At this period of my life, I corresponded with the late Edna Lyall, the author of *Donovan* and *We Two* and she showed me a lot of kindness. She was the means of my getting some articles into *Good Words*, then a 6d. monthly, under the editorship of Dr. Norman Macleod. It should be borne in mind that I was quite without wealthy, literary, or influential friends of any kind. I was just struggling on alone unaided, sometimes making any number of mistakes and paying dearly for them, but never quite losing hope. Naturally, after spending ten hours in the stuffy atmosphere of a factory, I did not always

feel equal to the strain of literary work in the evening, and then, too, after my father's death, my mother had become a semi-invalid, and I had household duties to perform which took up still more time. However, through it all editors proved very kind indeed, giving me every help and encouragement that lay in their power.

I remember that *Young Folks' Paper*, a London weekly journal long since dead, afforded great help to all literary aspirants who liked to avail themselves of the opportunity. Every week a column appeared, giving hints and practical advice to beginners: readers were invited to send in their attempts at composition, which the editor printed from time to time and criticized more or less severely. Several names with which I got quite familiar in the pages of *Young Folks' Paper*, have since become well-known in the world of journalism.

Mrs. Fenwick Miller, a name well known on both sides of the Atlantic, was also very kind to me. She accepted several of my articles for use in the *Woman's Signal* of which she was then editor, and I think, proprietor. Helpful, too, was the late Mr. A. E. Fletcher, then editor of the *New Age*, and the editors of the *Weekly Budget*, *Lloyd's Weekly News*, *Young Woman*, *Christian Commonwealth*, *Chambers's Journal*, *Westminster Review*, and other magazines and papers.

So the years went on. I was gradually gaining a footing in the world of journalism, slowly, as I often found to my cost, but none the less surely. At last I determined on a bold stroke of business, and even now I sometimes wonder how I dared. In the meantime my mother had died and left me desolate. So that I had a strong incentive to break up my home, leave the factory, and embark on my career as a "free-lance" journalist. I felt that a complete change of environment was necessary, and I got it. Of course my friends and relations said I was mad, and where they did not say so, I was morally certain they thought it all the same.

As it happened, later events quite justified my action. For several years I depended entirely on my pen for a living, and every year my prospects got brighter. That the struggle has been hard I do not deny, sometimes terribly hard, and how many times I have been tempted to give up in despair I cannot remember. But I liked the work, I did not like being beaten, and I have come to the conclusion that, taking it altogether, the game has been worth the candle. After all, there is some-



thing bracing and exhilarating in the thought that you have carved your way in life step by step, without help from anyone, and without hurting a single human being in so doing, and also that you have still strength and energy enough left to go on carving. I do not know the meaning of nerves. I can still sleep well and eat well, and when one can perform these functions to one's entire satisfaction, the frowns of the world have little effect. Of course, as Longfellow says,

Into each life some rain must fall  
Some days be dark and dreary,

and as the same poet says with equal truth,

There are things of which I may not speak,  
There are dreams that cannot die.  
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,  
And bring a pallor into the cheek,  
And a mist before the eyes.

As a "free-lance" journalist, my three best years were 1904, when my earnings just cleared £72. 1906, they jumped to £76, and in 1913 they reached £75. Naturally, when the war of 1914 broke out, my freelancing came to a dead stop. By this time I had returned to the West Riding of Yorkshire, and was living in a Girls' Friendly Society Lodge, paying 15s. a week for board and lodging. But in a manufacturing town there were plenty of openings for clerical work which could be easily filled by women and girls. Until the end of the war I was in full employment, and ended as a bookkeeper in a large canteen, run under the auspices of the Young Women's Christian Association.

While still working in the factory I had joined a public library, and my reading covered a very wide field. Some of my favourite authors were Ruskin, J. A. Froude, Charles Kingsley, Sir Walter Scott, George Eliot, Dickens, Charlotte Bronte, Louisa M. Alcott, Mark Twain, Rudyard Kipling, Macaulay, Mrs. Henry Wood, Charlotte M. Yonge, Emma Jane Worboise, Robert Blatchford, Marie Corelli, Ethel M. Dell, Henry Seton Merriman, Thomas Hardy, Robert Hichens, Halliwell Sutcliffe and Lord Lytton. Of poetry, well, I owe Lowell, Robert Burns, Oliver Goldsmith, Tom Hood, Ella a great deal to Tennyson, Longfellow, Bret Harte, J. Russell Wheeler Wilcox, W. T. Stead and his Penny Poets, and Rudyard Kipling's *Song of the English*, have often inspired me to further efforts.

Go to your work and be strong, halting not in your ways,  
Baulking the end half won for an instant dole of praise.  
Stand to your work and be wise—certain of sword and pen,  
Who are neither children nor gods, but men in a world of men.

Of course, during my years as a free-lance in a manufacturing town, my clothes cost me more than they did while working in the factory. As far as I can remember I spent between £10 and £12 every year. Then, too, after being without a proper holiday for over 20 years, I was naturally prone to spending money rather freely in that direction. My first taste of a real holiday was a fortnight in Whitby in company with a friend, and we had an enjoyable time in the quaint and interesting old town, but I cannot recall the cost of board and lodging.

On another occasion I had a long spell with my relations who lived on the borders of the New Forest. The railway fare from Yorkshire to Hampshire was a good sum, and as they were not rich people I was glad to be able to pay my own expenses getting about the country, which I found so delightful after being cooped up in a factory for so many years. Then, another year, I visited some relations in Cheltenham, and there again the railway fare was rather heavy, although in neither case did it cost me anything for board and lodging.

Then, too, I had found it necessary to join the Workers' Educational Association, the Co-operative Women's Guild, and the Society of Women Journalists. The fees had to be found annually, and also money for journeys to Oxford, Canterbury, Glasgow, and London, in connection with these societies. But my savings were practically nil, as I had some debts to repay after the death of my parents, contracted during their long illnesses.

### III

To me, and I believe, to the majority of people in this country, the years 1939 and 1940 have been very trying and upsetting in many respects. When the war broke out in September, 1939, I was two years over the allotted three score and ten. At that time I was working as a sort of assistant matron and secretary in a Girls' Holiday Home, not getting a stated salary, but of course given free board and lodging. My friendship with the then matron of the Home was of twenty-five years standing, and when she died in July, 1939, I left the Home, and again took up my previous calling as a "free lance" journalist—or at least I tried to do so.

On my 70th birthday I applied for my Old Age Pension, but the authorities refused to grant it, on the grounds that I was getting free board and lodging, which they estimated as being equal to 30s. a week, and therefore I was not entitled to the pension. While I was living at the Home, I did manage to do a bit of "free-lancing," just enough to keep my hand in, and supply myself with clothes, postage stamps, writing paper and envelopes, and other necessities of modern life. But alas! my expectations of being able to turn again to "free-lancing" received a severe shock. As it had proved in 1914, so it proved again in 1939, the outbreak of war speedily brought "free-lancing" to a dead stop. Newspapers and magazines were quickly reduced to half their normal size, and the majority of "free lances" were again banished to outer darkness, to sink or swim as best they could.

Well, I was compelled to look round for a modest bed-sitting room, which I was lucky enough to find without much trouble. My landlady has proved a most kind and motherly woman. She charges me 10s. a week as rent, with 1s. extra for coal in the winter months, and I board myself.

When I left the Home I had about £3 in hand, and I was owed for three or four articles which were already published but not paid for. Before the £3 had dwindled very much, I again applied for my Old Age Pension, and this time I was lucky. The pension officer called to see me and asked the usual string of questions, such as "where was I born, what were the names of my parents, and where and how had I lived during the last few years"? Then he began to get more searching still; "had I any money in hand, or money invested in shares of any description, did I earn any money by 'free-lancing' and how much had I earned for five years back"? He ended by asking if I could not get a cheaper bed-sitting room. My reply was, I could get a room at 5s. or 6s. weekly, but it would be unfurnished. In my case I had no furniture, and no money to buy any, so he dropped the argument. The catechism finished quite amicably, and eventually I got my pension. I was equally lucky when I applied for the Supplementary Pension, and nowadays I am in receipt of 19s. 6d. per week.

Of course it is utter nonsense to claim that any woman of seventy—or upwards—can live on 10s. a week. She may exist, but she cannot be said to live in decency and comfort. I had the practical experience of trying to live on 10s. a week



for my sole income, and then I was driven to apply to the Public Assistance Committee, which granted me 5s. a week for food. It was not a pleasant experience, by any means, but there it was. At this time I was four weeks in arrears with my rent, so had to do something drastic.

Now I will try and make clear just how I lay out my 19s. 6d., which I am thankful to get regularly every week. The food can easily be divided into three sections, rationed, unrationed, and extras. Take the rationed foods first. Butter is 1s. 6d. a lb., and I am allowed  $\frac{1}{4}$ -lb. weekly, which amounts to  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d.; the best margarine is 9d. a lb., of which I am also allowed a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -lb. a week which costs  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.; tea at 2s. 2d. per lb., is doled out 2-ozs. per week to each person, and amounts to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.; bacon is fixed at 1s. 8d. per lb., and each person is allowed 2-ozs. per week, which works out at  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.; fresh meat, which I can only afford once a week, is either a chop costing about 6d., or a small piece of steak at the same price; sugar is now  $4\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb., and each person is allowed half a pound, and you are charged  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. for that amount. The rationed foods which are strictly enforced, amount to 1s.  $8\frac{1}{2}$ d.

Now comes the turn of the unrationed foods. I use a tin of condensed or evaporated milk each week which costs 8d.; a bottle of coffee essence (small, and which saves tea) costs  $6\frac{1}{2}$ d.; and a tin of cocoa, Rowntree's or Cadbury's costs 5d. per tin, and lasts a fortnight just for supper; then I eat usually three loaves of bread per week, costing 9d. What I class as extras are fresh herrings or kippers which are selling at 7d. per lb. and run about  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. for two. Sausages make a nice change now and then for dinner. Good beef sausages are 8d. per lb., and one lb. of sausages will last two days. Toilet soap is 3d. per tablet. Cheese is usually 1s. 2d. per lb., and one quarter at  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. lasts me a week, while tripe, of which I am very fond, is  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per quarter lb.

Of course the extras include things which cannot be classed as absolutely necessary to life, yet they are needed by way of a change in a rather monotonous diet, and are varied as often as possible. If I cannot get one thing I like, I put up with something else. Just now eggs are  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. each, and I am very fond of eggs. If I cannot afford bacon and egg for breakfast, I just have one egg for dinner, in company with two medium-sized tomatoes and some fried slices of bread. Last winter when the weather was so cold and frosty, stews and soups had to be largely included in the daily menu. Then, there is no

convenience in a bed-sitting-room for laundry work, except just to wash handkerchiefs and stockings, so that it is compulsory for me to send my larger garments out once a fortnight, which generally costs 1s. 6d. or 9d. per week. Fresh fruit and bananas are out of my reach. Fruit has been very dear all the summer, and bananas are 2d. each.

As nearly as I can reckon the rationed foods cost me 1s. 9d. per week, the unrationed 2s. 5d., and the extras 2s. 6d., making a total of 6s. 8d., leaving me just 2s. 10d. out of the 9s. 6d. This leaves me to get stamps, ink, envelopes, writing paper, and a daily newspaper, with shoes, gloves, and underclothes, out of what "free-lancing" I can pick up. I cannot afford to go to the "pictures," or to a concert or play, but fortunately for me I live close to a good public library, and can indulge my appetite for reading to its full extent.

One blessing I have always valued highly. My health has been excellent throughout my life, and surely that is something for which to be truly thankful! During the present struggle, and the tremendous possibilities involved, the words of James Russell Lowell, the American poet, have often crossed my mind—

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood for the good and holy side ;  
Some great cause God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,  
Parts the goats upon the left hand and the sheep upon the right,  
And the choice goes by for ever 'twixt that darkness and that light.

## OF NOVELS AND FILMS

BY M. ST. CLARE BYRNE

SOME obscure but instinctive realization of affinity appears to impel the film to demand and use literary material.

It goes steadily on, adapting novels and stories, undeterred by frequent failures, by commercial losses, by the contempt of its own intelligentsia, and the equally open contempt of most literary authors. Its best friends urge that it should write its own stories, do its original thinking in its own medium, and keep its hands off "literature"; and the general comment upon the film version of any outstanding work of fiction is always the same—"Of course you can't expect it to be as good as the novel". The commercial value of a best-seller accounts for some of this persistence, but not all. Instead, therefore, of reiterating the parrot-cry of the inevitable inferiority of the film deriving from the novel with legitimate pretensions to greatness, is it not time to accept this persistence as matter for respectful consideration, and to admit that this particular kind has earned the right to serious constructive criticism?

The amazing divergence between the enthusiastic send-off accorded by the press to the film of *The Grapes of Wrath*, and its more than apathetic reception by the public, both in the West End and in the London suburban cinemas, provides an extraordinarily interesting topical occasion for an attempt to examine the situation. It was probably unfortunate that the majority of the notices gave it unmeasured and indiscriminating praise. When misled by hyperbole and disappointed of its expectations the public is apt to refuse to strike a decent mean of appreciation. It found itself tired by the length and bored by the monotony of what it had been told was a masterpiece. On two visits, the first in the West End, the second in the south suburbs, at popular week-end hours, I found the auditorium more than half empty; and before the film was more than three-fifths over, people who had come in at the beginning, as I did, started to straggle out. It is being



described as "altogether too miserable and depressing"; and those who fancy they know all about the public taste are busy, as usual, saying that the public will not have an "unhappy" story, and that anyway the public taste is always bad. Admirers of Steinbeck's novel are saying, quite rightly, that the film is inadequate and disappointing; and concluding as usual—quite wrongly, I believe—that it proves once again that the film should not attempt to handle literary material. Every reason, in fact, is being advanced to explain its failure, except the simple and obvious one. Public taste is a queer and chancy thing, but it relates to and is in some sense responsible for sound theory. The principles of artistic composition are not arbitrary rules, like those devised for a game: they are the methods that centuries of experience, observation and practice have proved to be successful, and even the youngest and newest art forms defy them at their own peril.

With the type of novel the composition of which can be analysed in terms of the sheer technique of good story-telling the film has shown itself fully competent to deal. A striking example of perfect transference from the one form to the other is *The Lady Vanishes*, where the problem is precisely technical, involving questions of timing, tensions, variety, emphasis, and a correct assessment of visual, aural and dramatic values, but not questions of reorganization of composition in visual terms or of structural alterations other than the simple kind necessary for the transferring of sequences of incident from the printed page to the screen. In the original novel the narrative *was* the composition, it was the rhythm, it was the sum total of the content. The writer had no statement to make, simply a good story to tell, a straightforward narrative of exciting action.

The novel proper, however, is something more than a good story. It has statements to make, a theme to develop, larger issues to shape, and a pattern other than that supplied by the mere chronological sequence of events. Clearly, therefore, it will demand for its derivative film not so much transference as translation, and an altogether subtler re-thinking. Between the two independent artistic creations there lies a borderland belonging absolutely to neither, and until the film sets itself the task of the full and faithful exploration of this *terra incognita* it is never going to do itself justice as a translator. As territory it is co-extensive with the whole field of interpretative criticism, and its mastery would mean for the film

understanding of the elements and sources of power in great literature. It is precisely for lack of such understanding that the film of *The Grapes of Wrath* fails artistically, in spite of the natural suitability of the material and of the sincere, honest, and well-intentioned handling it has received.

No film company would dream of employing camera-men who could merely snap the shutter but knew nothing of the potentialities of their apparatus. But if we are to judge by results, it will blithely employ as key workers, or as the final authority, men who understand nothing beyond the mechanics of the writer's craft, who have no grasp whatsoever of artistic form, are incapable of apprehending or interpreting the writer's larger intention, and have neither the natural nor the trained judgment that can assess and analyse the precise sources and elements of power in literary work, and distinguish between the essential and the inessential in selecting incident, episode and detail. The writer's effects are admired, but no attempt is made to see how they have been achieved, as the necessary preliminary for achieving the equivalent in another medium.

The first and most obvious strength of Steinbeck's novel is the largeness of its composition. It is built on the grand scale, and infinite skill has been devoted to the balancing and interlocking of all parts of the structure. Visually, it should have been a gift from heaven to imaginative production. It includes everything. For background there is the magnificent sweep and scope of the American scene—millions of square miles of it. A challenge art cannot meet? Far from it! Steinbeck, artist in words, meets it in the economically written pages of his choric-interlude chapters. It is his frame—the limit which must always be included, but from which the eye must always travel back to the centre. Governing the rhythm of the composition, creating the natural movement within the frame there is the migrant motif, sketched in on broad lines, emphasized and made clear and vivid by the familiar and accepted device of a journey, the progress of which is the story. Within this current of movement is the centre of rest, the focal point, the stabilization of interest in the intensely personalized story of the Joads, one of the dispossessed farming families of the Middle West, trekking to California in search of work—at once individual and symbolic; and within this focus there is yet a further concentration upon the two outstanding characters, a man and a woman, Ma Joad and her second son

Tom. Boldness and speed characterize the composition, and are reinforced by the vigorous rhythm of the prose. Here, in sum, is a source of strength so fundamental that any translating must make it a first charge on its resources. Here is plan, shape, coherence; instinct, moreover, with visual and pictorial opportunity. The intensely concentrated quality of life as conditioned by the family regarded as a group unit, for example, is made pictorially effective by being framed within car, tent, or shack, giving enlargement to the human beings and getting a striking adjustment of balance against the vastness of the background.

Now when a fundamental source of strength like this is missed it becomes not simply a lack but a positive weakness; and in the film as now shown there is no sign that this basic composition was ever recognized or reckoned with. Composition is not merely scamped: it is scrapped; and a part—the narrative—is substituted for the whole—a simplification which falsifies all the values, so that a novel of inescapable tragic grandeur and dimensions dwindles into an 'unhappy' story with a 'depressing' effect. For the beauty and the vastness of the American scene there is some assorted scenery, much of it perfunctory, photographically flat and un-alive or cardboard in effect, together with some 'views' and some shots of the Joad car that are irresistibly reminiscent of the seaside photographer's backcloth. Instead of expanding, everything seems to have shrunk in the filming, especially the migrant motif, the road, that terrific two-thousand-mile journey and that awful urgency to press on and on. Several of the choric-interlude chapters—notably No. XII—provide admirable material for getting-over the *feel* of all these; but as with the scenery, the use made of it is perfunctory and slipshod; and no real use is made of the counter-swirl or resistance to the movement, the rhythm of the westward trek, that is visually realizable in the returning migrant cars. This failure to find work in California is discussed in an over-lengthy bit of talk, when it could have been more vitally and economically expressed in visual terms stressed and commented on simply by the Joad faces. As for the journey—the whole point of it is its heroic quality as a struggle against small mishaps which mean a couple of hours delay to the smart roadster and may mean absolute disaster to the Joads who have to think in terms of ten cents' worth of bread. When a knocking in the engine—rear end gone dry?—means panic in the driver's heart, you do



not experience either the triumph or the terror of that journey by seeing a few shots of filling stations, a puncture mending, and things like a pretty picture-postcard view of New Mexico. And if any admirer of the novel who has *lived* that journey with the Joads should ask, Why use a shot of a flock of sheep surging across the road? the answer presumably is, 'Nobody ordered wolves'.

While missing this largeness of design by failing to recognize its elements, the film has seized with notable success upon the novel's second great source of strength, which is its admirable character work. The casting of the Joad family was brilliantly done: they really looked like a family—leanness and the Joad face emphasized in Granpa, Pa, Uncle John and young Al—Tom, Noah and Rosasharn stouter and more like Ma. And the acting throughout was fine and veracious. Again, however, the recognition of this source of strength seems to have been a slap-dash rather than a considered judgment; because although the individual character work was excellent, a great deal of its force and value was lost for lack of the reinforcement and background provided for it in the novel by the equally admirable group characterization. The casting gave one every hope that this was to be well translated, but after a good start it petered out and just got lost. (So, incidentally, did some of the individuals—perhaps in the cutting-room.) Uncle John, Al and Noah were never really *used*: consequently they became just so much clutter and loose ends. Had first things been made a first charge on the film, this group characterization and the adequate realizing of its subsidiary members would never have been sacrificed; and the family-ness of the family, together with its relation to society, would almost certainly have been stressed and brought out by the use of one of the other families—probably the Wilsons—with whom they temporarily link their fortunes.

By scamping this group characterization the film loses in great part one of the most poignant things in the novel—what it is that happens to these dispossessed people *as families*. Suddenly cut adrift from the settled habit of the agricultural community which for generations has conditioned their lives and bounded their outlook, it is the general tragedy of these folk that there is no place for them in the outside scheme of things. They belong to the land, and to that way of living. Turned out on to the migrant road, they belong nowhere; and dispossessed as a unit, the particular tragedy of disruption

within begins to overtake them. They slip out of their proper places: what was ordered living becomes haphazard existence: the harmony of relationships is lost: the man is no longer the head of his family; and the family, upon which the woman stakes her all, disintegrates. Throughout the book we live through this experience with the Joads, and it is one of the most important and moving things in their story.

Which brings us from the obvious to the underlying and most vital source of power in this as in any other great novel—that is, the statements of poetic force which the writer has to make, and the way in which he makes them. If you believe that the poets are ‘the unacknowledged legislators of the world’, and that the film is the art form which has the most immediately widespread effect in the modern world, it becomes one of the most imperative things in the world that the poet’s vision should find expression through the film. It has found it, now and again; as, for example, in *Men of the Lightship*, in the concluding shots and in the introductory sentence beginning, ‘Since Louis XIV told his army, ‘I am at war with England but not with humanity . . .’. In *The Grapes of Wrath* Steinbeck’s poetic vision has burnt clear of the crudities and alloys of his earlier work, and now flames steadily. He has something to say about man, who “grows beyond his works, walks up the stairs of his concepts, emerges ahead of his accomplishments.” He sees him as

muscles and mind aching to grow, to work, to create, multiplied a million times. . . . Having stepped forward, he may slip back, but only half a step, never the full step back. This you may say and know it and know it. This you may know when the bombs plummet out of the black planes on the market-place, when prisoners are stuck like pigs, when the crushed bodies drain filthily in the dust. You may know in this way. If the step were not being taken, if the stumbling-forward ache were not alive, the bombs would not fall, the throats would not be cut. Fear the time when the bombs stop falling while the bombers live—for every bomb is proof that the spirit has not died. And fear the time when the strikes stop while the great owners live—for every little beaten strike is proof that the step is being taken. And this you can know—fear the time when Manself will not suffer and die for a concept, for this one quality is the foundation of Manself, and this one quality is man, distinctive in the universe.

Everything that Steinbeck has to say is, in a sense, part of this statement, and sixteen of his thirty chapters are devoted to it. If anyone still believes that all the film wants from works of this kind is its ‘damn good story’ he had better re-read one of the best of A. P. Herbert’s *Topsicalities* and see

just what Topsy's "fresh mind" made of *Othello* as a good story about "one absolute cad, one absolute half-wit, and one absolute cow". It is the whole book that has swept through America and England, like a great wind, quickening the imaginations of men; and it is preposterous to imagine that those sixteen vital chapters can be ignored or distorted in translation to the screen. But that, in effect, is what the film has done. It cannot expect to use them in the same way or in the same order as the novel; but if it will take the trouble to see what these vital statements are, its task should then be clear, because the novelist, as it were, hands us the method when he keys, points and stresses them in those sixteen choric-interlude chapters. To carry through and beyond the story-interest in the film they must similarly be keyed and stressed; and this can be done by re-thinking the order in which they are to be made. For maximum visual effectiveness, the order undoubtedly is—universal, general, particular; announcing the themes as one would in a musical composition, (and, if possible, with music, so that the repeated musical theme can help the spectator to pick up the statement again when it merges into and becomes one with the narrative.) Steinbeck's universal statement is concerned with the land, its fruitfulness, man's hunger for it, his love of it, and the relation of all this to the family as unit and to society as the whole. The film has dozens of good ways of making this statement, with all its dependent clauses, in a few minutes. It has only got to refer to the methods of its own documentaries, and to the technique of some of the early Russian work.

His general statement is co-extensive with his scene—America; with California and the "dust bowl" as dependent clauses. As he particularizes, land becomes on the one hand croppers' land and on the other multiple farming; Joad land and the dust bowl: 'the family' becomes Joads: Joads become Pa, Ma, Tom and the rest. We follow their particular story, and its environment is seen in relation to the larger background, which is the general; and which relates always to the ultimate things which are his universal. Always, the wheel comes full circle. This is the fundamental structure which the novelist has invested with such rich and varied being, crying aloud with every noun, verb and adjective for visual realization. And the dynamic centre from which the emotional impulse of the independent film creation should derive is the passionate



writing of Chapter XXV—"in the eyes of the hungry there is a growing wrath. In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage."

In the film, by ignoring the universal and handling the general without any clear realization of its function, breadth and vigour are lost, there is a consequent loss of sharpness in the detail, and the particular becomes monotonous and flat. The statement of California and the balancing statement of the dust bowl are selectively and photographically weak. There is neither beauty nor terror: neither the fruitfulness of the promised land nor the howling desolation of the lost land. The ignoring of theme and structure has led to the loss of such essential and naturally filmic incidents as the selling-off of the agricultural stock and the buying of the car from the car-knacker's yard: to the loss, also, of the beauty of the wayside encamping—"each night a world created"—which is so necessary to balance the squalor of Hooverville; and to the frittering away of the dramatic beauty and the ritual-idyllic value of that bathing in the river on the border of the promised land—structurally, a tremendously significant moment, when we should hear, for the first time, the note of menace, warning the outcasts that this land of plenty is not for their possessing. But while the lack of the proper bridge-work of interpretative criticism can account for these and similar artistic weaknesses, it is difficult on any grounds to account for the failure to utilize fully the possibilities of the Joad car, both as a character in itself, and as a focus for incident revelatory of individual and group character.

*The Grapes of Wrath* is one of the great tragic novels of our time, and it is a universal statement. Throughout the world the desert—man-made—is gaining on man; and the understanding of this is vital to his survival. It is not a purely American problem: the British Empire fights it too; and its dimensions are world-wide. England is still deeply ignorant of America and its problems; and the Anglo-American collaboration that is going to be essential for winning the peace after the war will never be effective unless there is sympathetic understanding between the two nations. Steinbeck's novel has given its readers this imaginative apprehension: the film, by its failure to grasp the principles which govern great artistic composition, fails to meet the need of the time and the challenge of great writing.

## EBB AND FLOW

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

**R**EADING over what I wrote a month ago has turned my mind to the caption of these notes. Ebb there was, beyond all imagined limit, till the miracle of Dunkirk stopped it; yet even after that, what seemed the very worst had to come with Pétain's surrender; the only sign of a new tide making was in the British people's amazing buoyancy. No hopeful movement of events could be registered; and what I wrote reflected only an incoherent confidence. To-day it is different. We can as yet look for no help in Europe, not being strong enough to ensure protection to the State that should offer it. Across the Atlantic we have till now had encouragement, yet limited meticulously by America's determination not to be involved. But now, statesmen have found a way to give expression to the desires and purposes of those whose heart is with Great Britain, and yet to do this without act of war. They have found it in an act of peace. Great Britain and France went to war for the world, and dearly they have paid for their venture; but while one of them is left standing, the purpose stands. To-day that purpose is served by conceding to the custodians of American freedom key-positions which should ensure the New World against predatory enterprise; in return for this, the United States hands over fifty destroyers, old but serviceable to Great Britain, in existing conditions. Both sides gain, not only by what they get but by what they surrender. This is the most constructive thing that has happened since the war started; it is the firmest step towards a new and better world. It may even be regarded as the most important happening of the year, for it is certain to last; Hitler's achievements we are taught to regard as transient.

Look at it this way. Somebody has to police the world; otherwise majorities will suffer from the Al Capones who organize their minorities of gunmen. At the moment, Great Britain is in deadly danger because, having already to police

the oceans and numberless territories across the ocean, she felt it necessary to act policeman in the continent of Europe. Never henceforward will Great Britain be able to say, or think of saying, that events in Czechoslovakia or Poland are too far off to be her concern. She is now part of the continent; and inevitably she feels the need to transfer some of her oceanic responsibility where she can do so with confidence. That is what she has done "along a wide arc" (in Mr. Churchill's phrase) reaching from Newfoundland to Guiana. Deliberately she has enlarged the sphere of transfer by throwing in a base in Newfoundland and another in Bermuda so as to make clear that the United States is to picket the seaways leading to the St. Lawrence and New York as well as those leading to the Panama Canal. Deliberately also President Roosevelt has accepted the responsibility which will be exercised at the discretion of the United States. One branch of the English-speaking world hands over to another a good slice of oceanic sovereignty which it had become burdensome to retain since resources were more than fully occupied in coping with the residue, yet which could be surrendered without the least fear that Great Britain's interest and her honour would suffer. By accepting, the United States assisted Britain to make good her championship of freedom in Europe, and at the same time, in acknowledgment of the added security gained for American interest they handed over a block of armament which undoubtedly would not have been transferred without a strong wish that success should attend them.

But above all there comes into sight something like a pooling of sovereignty; and this was not the only symptom. By action taken directly between Canada and the United States, and taken with a swiftness that no autocracy could outstrip, a council was set up to concert measures for the security of North America. Nobody seems to have questioned whether Canada had the right to act thus independently; everybody was overjoyed that the action should have been taken. Canada, remaining a Dominion of the British Commonwealth, not outdone in devotion by any part of that Commonwealth, is also part of North America, with security guaranteed by the United States, and on her part guaranteeing their security. Sovereignty tends to become international—in the English-speaking world.

But the lesson has further application. Great Britain gladly concedes eight Gibaltars in British territory to a power which



can help to police the ocean. It is a fair inference that Spain loses nothing by the British tenure of Gibraltar and that the world gains by it. There is also a reflection on the case of Ireland, which puts out of action two or three Gibaltars on her coast, with advantage only to the German U-boats.

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If there have been positive gains across the Atlantic, losses have to be recorded elsewhere. Surrender of the Channel

**Losses** Islands was a painful necessity, though navy and air force combined have succeeded in maintaining that the Channel remains British. One

need feel much less concern about what appears a grave matter—the withdrawal of a British garrison from the international settlement at Shanghai; for whether Japan wins or China wins, or neither wins, all European troops in the Concessions will be in an impossible position when that war ends. As to Hongkong, strategists may differ; but it would be infinitely preferable to see it in American hands than in Japanese.

What has happened in British Somaliland also leave me dry-eyed. It was offered to the Italians before and has at most a strategic value as a point from which communications to India can be threatened. But Italy already possesses these opportunities; and indeed the loss is generally measured in terms of prestige. This has a value which can easily be overrated. Attack by ships in the Dardanelles was undertaken, because if it failed, there would be no difficulty as to withdrawal; but when the Cabinet decided to admit failure, Lord Kitchener insisted that the enterprise must be carried on by land to avoid loss of prestige. After costing 400,000 casualties it had to be abandoned—with the maximum loss of prestige; yet the first decisive signs of victory came in the Mahomedan regions where loss of prestige had been specially feared. The Mahomedan world will not be greatly affected by withdrawal of the British flag from Berbera so long as it can be carried unchallenged from one end of the Mediterranean to the other and through the Red Sea.

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Manifestly events are preparing in the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey does not move not wishing to face a possible

**Mediterranean** combination of Russia and the Axis powers:  
**Movements** yet plainly so far, Turkey counts victory for the British as at least possible. Rumania came to a different conclusion and surrendered to the Axis powers, after

first giving in to Russia. Not much is left of Rumania to-day, but what remains is pledged to support the Axis, even while bitterly rebellious against the terms which the Axis imposed for Hungary's advantage. It is only fair to say that Rumania could count on nothing but her own resources if she resisted: Great Britain could not reach her. The case is very different in Greece. Here, power rests with a man who is known to be a convinced admirer of German military skill and certainly has no enthusiasm for democracy. But he is also, in the opinion of highly qualified judges, the ablest statesman and the ablest soldier in any of the Balkan countries, and he is at the head of a nation said to equal any of the Balkan States in fighting quality and to excel them in military skill. It is therefore significant that General Metaxas, though formidably threatened by Italy, shows no sign of surrender and holds to Great Britain's guarantee of assistance—which the British fleet and air force are ready to afford. Plainly this leader, if he dare not count on British victory, is in no way disposed to count on British defeat. In short, prestige has not been appreciably shaken; and day by day, week by week, Germany has been losing the reputation for irresistible power. It looks more and more like a contest between the power which controls the seas and the power which controls the land for supremacy in the third element. Germany can concentrate her attack on a narrow crowded target accessible from a hundred points after a few minutes flying: the British must distribute their effort over an area reaching from the inner Baltic to Bordeaux, and from the Arctic circle to cities beyond the Alps. And yet up to the present Germany, to say the least, is not winning.

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Meanwhile, individual Poles and Czechs and Frenchmen are helping to break up the invading armadas; but under General de Gaulle's leadership Free France begins to assume an international personality and power. Strangely enough, the first organic movement of a province to join in the resistance comes from equatorial Africa. France has been careful to let Africans know that Hitler classed them as "half apes"; and they know well enough that France has taught them to think of themselves as Frenchmen. This has not been mere theory. Some years ago I wrote here of a novel about Equatorial Africa which won the *Prix Goncourt*; the author of *Batouala* was a pure negro, and an administrator in the territory of which he wrote. One

of the signatures which appeared in the announcement of the Chad districts decision looked to me like an African name. Senegal has not yet moved; in Morocco, the work done by Lyautey may or may not show results. But at all events in Africa, in what used to be called darkest Africa, there is sign of light. Even to-day messages may be throbbing across the Continent. Away north, in the shifting wastes of sand where Laperrine and de Foucauld, the General of the Sahara and the saint of the Sahara, lie in one tomb, comrade by comrade, surely there must be a stirring. Only one thing is clear; and General de Gaulle ought to understand that we understand it. There is talk of our fighting to give back to France what she has lost. That is wrong; no man and no nation can give such gifts to another; France herself must recover her own place in Europe, helping us while we help her. To wish General de Gaulle Godspeed is wishing Godspeed to France.

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Now that it becomes more and more strictly true to say that we are all in the battle zone, and more and more evident that

<b>Industrial Soldiers</b>	workers in factories stick to their posts under danger like good soldiers, one rejoices to see them looked after as the British officer is taught to look after his men. Mr. Bevin has interposed to prevent young men from killing themselves with putting in too much overtime for too long; I like the prohibition and I like the need for it. I like also a report on this matter of health and welfare issued by the British Association for Labour Legislation. They want to make sure that beneficent provisions of the Factories Act shall not become dead letters and they ask for additional factory inspectors to keep watch on all relaxations of ordinary rules; and for a careful reckoning to determine what is really the period to give maximum production, when allowance is made for loss through sickness or overstrain. If the inspectors can be trusted to realize that man or woman, boy or girl, is very seldom the worse for any amount of work that he or she wants to do, by all means have more of them.
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# THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

## THE EUROPEAN CATASTROPHE

By ROBERT POWELL

**ROAD TO DISASTER**, by Ernst Klein.  
*Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.*

Many are the guides who would retrace for us the landmarks along the road which led to the European catastrophe. Some have been inspired more by wishful thinking than by any deep understanding of the countries and peoples concerned. Happily, however, there have also been others whose knowledge and experience justify their taking up this task.

Among these latter is Herr Ernst Klein, whose work as an outstanding journalist on Austrian, German and Swiss newspapers covers nearly 40 years. Like so many other Austrian writers at the beginning of the century he went to Berlin to seek a career. As Balkans correspondent to the *Lokalanzeiger* until 1914, and later in the Austrian army and secret service he had excellent opportunities of observing key events at first hand. His conclusions are here given in a book which is something more than memoirs.

Europe's *Road to Disaster* begins for Herr Klein when the Young Turks raised the standard of revolt at Monastir on July 23rd, 1908, and the Balkan confusion of the next six years led to the World War, especially as the Great Powers showed no sincere desire to enforce order in south-east Europe.

But "beginning" is obviously meant to mean the *occasion* rather than the *cause* of the catastrophe which he sees as the struggle of Pan-Germanism against Pan-Slavism and the elimination of Austria from a pivotal position in continental affairs.

Herr Klein is both an enthusiastic Austrian and an ardent monarchist. So ardent a Habsburger is he that he declares that he "tried again and again" to persuade Dr. Edward Benesh of Czechoslovakia in the post-1933 years that the restoration of that monarchy would not mean anything but the establishment of a bulwark against National Socialism. Such a contention is open to grave doubts, as is also the repetition of the hypothesis that the Archduke Franz Ferdinand had he lived would have introduced into the former Austria-Hungary the "trialism" which would have given the Slavs the equal position in the old empire denied them by the *Ausgleich* of 1867. Many Austrians who worked with the Archduke in the years immediately before 1914 have doubted whether he had the resolution to carry through such a scheme in the teeth of opposition from Berlin and Budapest.

Perhaps the author's experiences after 1919 are much more interesting to the average reader than those which

preceded it, since he spent the time in Berlin as correspondent of the great Swiss newspaper, the *Basler Nachrichten*. He only left the German capital in August, 1935, when he was expelled by the Nazis.

Herr Klein was a great admirer of Stresemann and, like many other observers, believed that if only the Reichstag had had less political parties and more political personalities and the Western governments had supported the Weimar Republic more openly and consistently, there would never have been a January 30th, 1933.

Of Stresemann Klein writes, "He was a monarchist. His ideal . . . was a popular imperialism (*Volskaisertum*) which he thought of in its groundwork as more democratic than the English constitutional monarchy".

Herr Klein's loathing for Nazism is clear in every line of his treatment of that subject. He sees it as a new form of Prussianism. "National Socialism is the work of Hitler and his band, but it is in essence nothing but a resurrection of the old Prussian Pan-Germanism which had the subjugation of foreign peoples in its programme". His description of the road to disaster is accompanied by suggestions for a new Europe more firmly established on just foundations. Like all who have the least understanding of German mentality to-day, the author opposes the dismemberment of the Reich as an action which would be as bitterly resented as was the Versailles Treaty. But he would destroy Prussia *within* the German Empire by reducing it to the size it was before Prussian aggression made it the dominant state east of the Rhine. The kingdoms, duchies

and free cities (Hanover, Saxony, Westphalia, etc.) which Prussia seized should be independent once more, and Prussia reduced to the size of a small state like Saxony. Weimar, not Berlin should be the new German capital,

As for central and south-east Europe, "the important thing is that the Danube states, with which I include the Balkan states, should find their way together quite freely and quite voluntarily without the participation of any of the European Great Powers. Then they will form a great power themselves strong enough to withstand successfully any aggressor". Within this framework would also be included Prussian and Austrian Silesia.

Such a confederation it is clear would have Vienna as its capital. Presumably Herr Klein with his great faith in the Habsburgs visualizes this new confederation as being directed by one of that house from the Hofburg. Such an idea certainly seems untenable to a large proportion of the present inhabitants of the area in question. But that something on a comprehensive scale will have to be arranged in Danubia after this catastrophe has passed is obvious to all.

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ROGER FRY. by Virginia Woolf.  
*Hogarth Press.* 12s. 6d.

This biography has the very great merit of allowing its subject to speak for himself on almost every page. In this holding back of her own personality Mrs. Woolf's artistry is most surely displayed. She knew Fry well; she might have assessed him with an authority which few would have dared to dispute; she has her own public which has come to expect of her certain

things, a public on the whole less curious to know what Roger Fry was like than what Mrs. Woolf might find to say about him in her own distinguished manner.

Such readers may be disappointed. Here and there sentences and paragraphs occur which they will recognize and applaud, but for the most part the biographer is content to withdraw into a comprehending silence, whence the voice of Fry can be heard issuing clearly, almost as in life.

He was a puzzling character on the surface, though simple enough deep down. A Quaker by upbringing, a Bohemian by temperament; a painter for his own pleasure, a critic and lecturer for the pleasure of others; a man of complete integrity and what one of his friends called "an almost nefast gullibility;" a man who would not serve under Pierpoint Morgan on account of the millionaire's indifference "to the real value of things," but who could unconcernedly ask that personage for a thousand pounds to finance an unworldly magazine; and get it, too. These were his contradictions. The fundamental simple facts about him were that he was good as bread; that he could always learn, new things and people having no terrors for him; and that he had courage to spare, including the courage of his convictions.

Mrs. Woolf makes great claims for Roger Fry. She says that he had an influence on English taste greater than any critic since Ruskin at the height of his fame. Such a statement is sweeping enough, but very few will dispute it. He brought the Post-Impressionists to London, and it is odd to read now, only thirty years later of the sound and fury raised by the per-

formances of Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin; how he and they were mocked by the instructed public, scolded by the professors. He founded workshops where artists could earn thirty pieces of silver a week without betraying their own souls. He went up and down preaching his new vision with an irresistible personal charm, and a persuasiveness and a pertinacity which made a whole generation his converts. He was not, Mrs. Woolf thinks, wholly aware of what he was doing. He envied his friend Lowes Dickinson the power to create through his influence upon the minds of the young, and himself unknowingly assumed that power every time he opened his mouth. Young people loved him. He made everyone, they said, share his enjoyments. And since his enjoyments were concerned for the most part with form and colour, form and colour were accepted by them in that idiom which he preferred and spoke most freely. It was no doubt in his favour that this idiom should have been one which the indignant professors were refusing to master. "If they only knew," said he, "what mildness, what caution, what prudent conservatism, what elderly wisdom there was behind this hob-goblin mask of mine how very shamefaced they'd be." But they never found out; and even in 1927, when it might be supposed that the revolution which he started had passed into its innocuous stage, Oxford rejected him from the Slade chair. The snub did not anger, though it surprised him. In fact, he did not need a chair to give his critical authority weight. When he spoke out of his own incorruptible heart he spoke *ex cathedra*, and the British public listened while he told it to look at every



picture as though it had never seen any picture before.

Mrs. Woolf must be thanked for re-introducing Roger Fry to those who have forgotten their debt to him, and for performing the introduction with her own dignity and grace.

HELEN SIMPSON.

**EARLY VICTORIAN CAMBRIDGE**, by D. A. Winstanley. *Cambridge University Press*. 25s.

This work may be regarded as a sequel to those already published by Mr. Winstanley on *Cambridge in the 18th Century* and *Unreformed Cambridge*. Needless to say that it is a monument of accurate scholarship and painstaking research. In particular it is a shining example of filial piety towards the Great Foundation of which the author is a distinguished son. To all Cambridge men who are interested in academic politics and to Trinity men in particular Mr. Winstanley's book will be of great interest. Its appeal must, however, of necessity be rather limited. The "jacket" suggests that "battles of university politics (like those of chess) have the excitement and interest of battles of larger scope" and that "Cambridge, a nation in little . . . . is a perfect subject for miniature history". Cambridge residents will naturally assent to this statement; but the author himself confesses to some misgivings when in his Preface he writes apologetically that he may be thought "to have taxed the memory and, what is worse, the patience of the reader by describing in such detail the many changes made in the curriculum and educational system of the University". Again he writes (p. 371): "It

has unfortunately not been possible to do justice to the combatants in that struggle (between the Statutory Commissioners and the Governing Body of Trinity College in 1859) without going into much confusing detail". In view of such a frank apology it were ungracious to emphasize the point, but it must be acknowledged that the general reader may find the "detail" more than a little confusing.

"Such an institution cannot be regarded as a mere aggregation of private interests; it is eminently national. It would seem, therefore, to be a matter of public policy that . . . such measures should be taken as may serve to raise its efficiency to the highest point and to diffuse its benefits most widely." That emphatic assertion of the national character of the University appeared in the forefront of the Report of the Oxford Commission of 1852. It was equally true of Cambridge. In the case of Oxford no less than of Cambridge many of the resulting reforms were primarily domestic in character affecting the Constitution and powers of the Governing Bodies in the University and the Colleges, the relations between the State and the ancient Universities, and still more the relations between the Universities and the Nation.

If the Commissioners were justified in regarding the Universities as national institutions, it was evidently pertinent to enquire how far the Universities were conscious of their wider responsibilities and were prepared to adapt their internal economy to the growing needs and demands of the nation as a whole. The answer to these questions was found on the one hand in the

abolition of religious tests, by the admission of poorer students who were not attached to any College or Hall, by extending facilities to women students and so on; on the other hand by instituting local examinations and local lectures for the benefit of those outside the limits of the resident University.

Some of these reforms were effected only in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, and so do not fall within the limits of Mr. Winstanley's survey. He does, however, deal with evangelical movement at Cambridge, with which Charles Simoneon was so closely associated, and with the establishment, despite influential opposition of a Branch of the British & Foreign Bible Society at Cambridge, and, at greater length with the movement for the abolition of Religious Tests. But much the greater portion of this book is devoted to the internal affairs of the University; to the position of the Heads of Colleges and, in particular, of the Masters of Trinity; to a storm in a tea-cup at the Fitzwilliam Museum; to the establishment of new Triposes, the provision of laboratories, lecture rooms and the like. It is characteristic of Mr. Winstanley's "piety", and his natural preoccupation with the internal affairs of his own College, that a whole chapter should be devoted to Christopher Wordsworth, and that all four appendices should deal with Trinity: its Fellowships; its Seniority; with Sir Isaac Newton's Rooms, and with the statue of Isaac Barrow in the Chapel. A concluding chapter on "Cambridge as it Was" is, for the general reader, the most interesting in the book.

J. A. R. MARRIOTT.

**THE WEST WIND OF LOVE**, by Compton Mackenzie. *Chatto & Windus. 9s. 6d.*

**WEST TO NORTH**, by Compton Mackenzie. *Chatto & Windus. 9s. 6d.*

Whew! Mr. Mackenzie, your winds are breath snatching. The latest instalment, *West to North*, is the second half of *West Wind*, so, to be scrupulously fair to the one, I re-read the other. From this test of endurance I emerge battered, dazed, chilly and brrrh! there's a colder wind to come.

For this shaken and apprehensive state Mr. Mackenzie's style and characters and the post-Great-War history he treats of are equally responsible. The mistakes, wilful or inadvertent, the muddle, the blindness of greedy politicians and a bawling populace in those days from 1918-22 are here set out in damning array. When he is simply telling that tragic story and not arguing a case he is altogether satisfying. But how rarely does he let the tale unfold without intruding his own particular brand of polemics. Let one of his characters but murmur something about Black and Tans, or Venizelos, or Jewish culture, or Mr. Lloyd George, or Atlantis, or music, or Blackshirts, or Scottish nationalism, or sedition, or the Roman Church, or anything you like, and away races John Ogilvie, his hero, with a couple of pages of rhetoric to each.

It is odd that such fluency, such enthusiasm, such knowledge of detail should fail to stimulate, unless it is indeed true that there can be too much of a good thing. John is an excellent husband and a fond father; he is frightfully intelligent, politically and artistically; he is intent on making the world a better place and could give



a very fair idea of how it should be done. One should love such an admirable man—and, as so often happens with those we love (or should love), we are irritated by him, as we are by the colourless mind of his wife, Athene.

Apparently Mr. Mackenzie is so interested in ideas that so long as his characters ventilate them he does not care if they fail to talk credibly. Indeed they are often not credible at all. Julius and Emil Stern are so intellectually snobbish that they are distorted into caricature. Geoffrey Noel wanders in and out of the two books making moan at his wife's failure to send his allowance on every occasion, but fails utterly to give a picture of himself. Miriam Stern obviously plays the piano very well indeed. She even talks intelligently, but one does not know her any better

than when one first met her in *The East Wind*. Perhaps Fitz comes nearest to a flesh and blood man (Irishman rather) and, true to type, he gets himself killed. Yet the children in these books are good. Their charming talk is just the correct fit; they are convincing and the young Prudence is a darling. Mr. Mackenzie's scenery is always good, too. He never overwrites this, and in a few words he can set before the eyes the magic of colour and light, of mountain, of sea and of the "Gothic masses" of cliff and lonely island.

If most of the foregoing may be described as carping it is still a measure of the disappointment that can assail an admirer of all that energy, that interest in affairs, that knowing a good story when he sees it, which goes to the making of Mr. Mackenzie's books. His reading of events makes him

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important as a historian, and a very little extra trouble, on top of all the colossal labour of writing these books, would make him so much more satisfying as a novelist. He has been accused, so says his dedication in *West to North*, of making John Ogilvie "too much of a Cassandra about the future". He must be defended from this particular sort of detraction. Ordinary minds know whither mankind is tending and are troubled thereby. It would be surprising if an acute intelligence like his should fail to see several steps ahead to the actual bomb crater.

And now, having recovered breath, I wait undaunted for *The North Wind*. Bitterly cold it must be. Nothing has happened between the early twenties and the present time which could alter Mr. Mackenzie's weather vane. It is his business to record foul weather in his next book, but perhaps he may be induced to forecast as well. A sign from such an authority that the depression is lifting would be as valuable as welcome.

GEA MORRIS.

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**HEIL HUNGER**, by Dr. Martin Gumpert. *Allen and Unwin*. 5s.

Not the least peril of war is the willingness of all belligerents to indulge in self-deception. Dr. Gumpert, described on the book jacket, as "formerly head of a large clinic in Berlin," has no doubt good reason for disliking the Nazi régime but he does his case no good by this form of propaganda. Facts are facts, but as we all know from watching the weavings of Dr. Goebbels, they can be used to conceal what is essentially a lie.

I would not accuse Dr. Gumpert of evil intention. No doubt he believes

much of what he has written, even if he has been forced to strain a little to make the facts fit his declared object of revealing "to British readers that dictatorship is a sickness which drives all concerned to inevitable physical breakdown; that freedom is the first condition for the biological advancement of the individual and of the social group". In sum Dr. Gumpert by a judicious selection and omission of facts has contrived by an equally careful presentation to paint a picture of conditions which do not exist. It is a bad case of wishful writing.

The casual reader would need to be forgiven if on reading this book he came to three conclusions: (1) that the health of Germany under Hitler was so bad that Great Britain's task was simply to blockade Germany and wait confidently for Germany's collapse and victory; (2) that Germany under the Weimar Republic had a much better record to report; (3) that the health of this country before the outbreak of war was vastly superior to that of Germany. None of these conclusions would be true. Dr. Gumpert manages to make favourable comparisons to support his case but the fact is that a similar book could equally well be written by a pro-Hitler propagandist proving ostensibly the same points about this country.

The truth is that both in Great Britain and in Germany the standard of health was relatively high. What health conditions are like in Germany to-day, we do not know, but there would need to be a very marked decline for there to be an immediate prospect of victory through blockade.

JOHN ARMITAGE.